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A YEAR IN REVIEW

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Our 2015 highlights

IT SEEMS A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN 12 MONTHS...

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM OUR ARCHIVES, MAGAZINES AND CHRONICLES, THERE'S A WHOLE LOT OF ACTION GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF BJJ. FROM THE GYM TO THE MAT, WE'VE COVERED IT ALL. AND WE'VE BEEN THERE TO SEE IT ALL. FROM THE GYM TO THE MAT, WE'VE COVERED IT ALL. AND WE'VE BEEN THERE TO SEE IT ALL.





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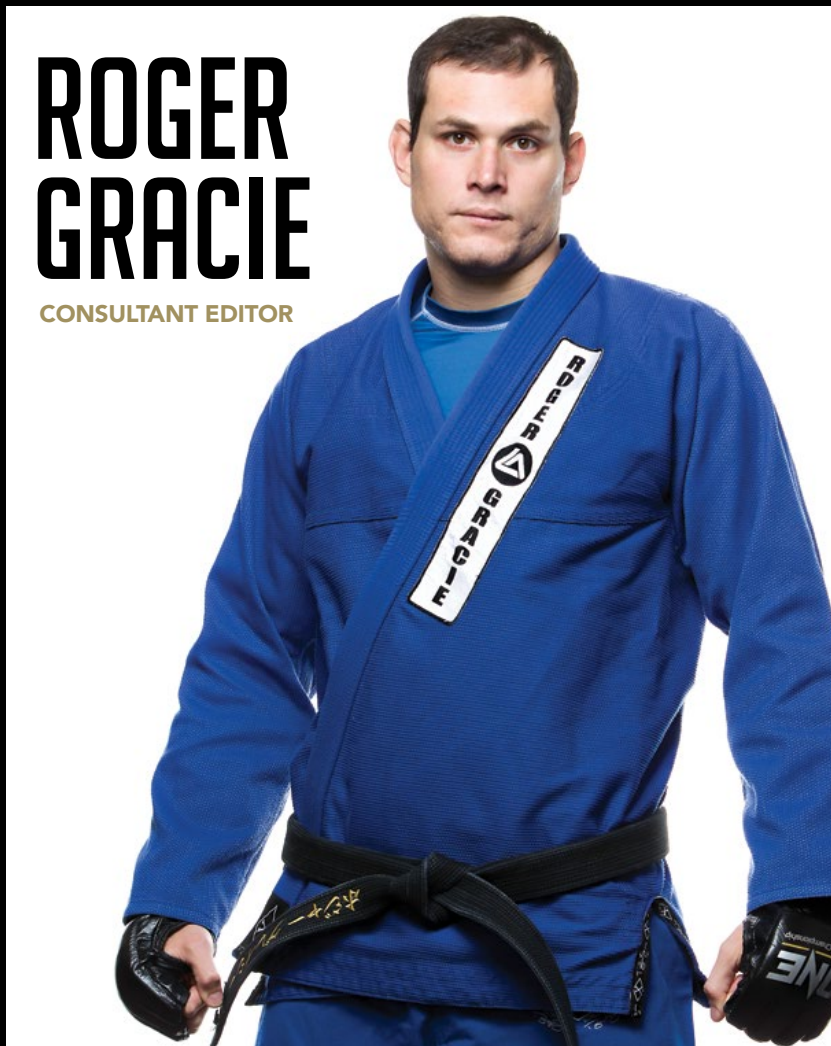
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ROGER GRACIE

CONSULTANT EDITOR



“ON A PERSONAL NOTE, I AM ADAMANT THAT 2016 WILL BE THE YEAR THAT SEES ME RETURN TO FIGHTING IN THE GI”

I always enjoy writing my first column of a new year, as it offers a great chance to reflect on some of the standout stories over the past twelve months. As expected, there have been some fantastic performers at the major competitions, and we've decided to put together a list of our favourites in 'Our Year In Review' feature.

Mackenzie Dern will look back at 2015 as the year she managed to cement her status as one of the best fighters in jiu jitsu. Beating Gabi Garcia in Abu Dhabi, then picking up a submission win in her World Championship final against Michelle Nicolini were both fantastic to watch.

I also want to congratulate Bernardo Faria, who emerged as the man on top at the World Championships this year. Though Rodolfo Vieira was not able to compete due to injury, and Buchecha was also forced to withdraw, Bernardo looked like he was in unbeatable form and he deserves his moment in the spotlight.

Rafael Mendes is another fighter who is clearly competing in a league of his own at the moment. To win his fifth world title without conceding a single point in any match is exceptional. Mendes now stands alone as the only featherweight to win five world titles and who knows what more he is capable of achieving.

We have a great Masterclass inside this issue with my friend and great teacher, Ze Radiola. Ze has been responsible for helping to develop

some amazing athletes, like Braulio and Victor Estima, as well as Charles Negromonte who teaches at my academy. Ze is a guy who always likes to keep up to date and learn new techniques, so make sure you check out this feature.

On a personal note, I am adamant that 2016 will be the year that sees me return to fighting in the gi. I've been talking to a number of people about some potential super fights that would be very interesting, so let's see what the future holds. One thing is for sure and that is my desire to make a return to jiu jitsu.

Enjoy the latest issue of the magazine guys and – until next time – keep training and enjoying jiu jitsu.

ROGER GRACIE



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BROWN / BLACK BELT (MASTERI MALE) OPEN WEIGHT • PURPLE (ADULT FEMALE) OPEN WEIGHT
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THE BIG PICTURE

One of the standout athletes of 2015, Mackenzie Dern, photographed in California.

PICTURE: FLAVIO SCORSATO



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CLASSIC MATCH

ADCC 2003,
ABU DHABI

"I DIDN'T EXPECT THE GI LOVERS TO JUMP FOR JOY, BUT I TRULY THOUGHT THEY WOULD ADMIT I WAS ONTO SOMETHING. INSTEAD, THEY DID THEIR BEST TO SWEEP MY VICTORY UNDER THE RUG. IT WAS THE LARGEST UPSET IN ABU DHABI HISTORY, AND THEY SIMPLY IGNORED IT" - EDDIE BRAVO



**EDDIE BRAVO VS
ROYLER GRACIE**



BACKGROUND

By 2003, Brazilian jiu jitsu was fairly well established in the United States and beginning to spread out to the rest of the world. It was an integral (if declining) part of MMA, though the Gracie family status had diminished with successive victories by Kazushi Sakuraba. In BJJ competition however, 'Gracie' remained a name to conjure with. Royler Gracie was of particular importance, a legendary and still active figure in the featherweight division. His trophy cabinet was overflowing with titles from the Mundials as well as the most prestigious nogi tournament, the ADCC.

American black belts were unusual at the highest echelons of the sport. BJ Penn was an exception, becoming the first American to win gold at the Mundials

Hillary Williams and Lana Stefanac have been able to follow Penn's example (Lana went one better, winning the Absolute division as well!). Though the US has a slightly better pedigree in the ADCC (with ten champions up until 2015), few expectations rested on the shoulders of a Jean Jacques Machado brown belt competing at the 2003 event, a man who entered the world as Edgar Cano. He became rather better known as Eddie Bravo.

An experienced competitor, Bravo had begun his training in 1994, entering his first tournament in 1996. He was only a brown belt, but had demonstrated his skill by defeating Gustavo Dantas, a well-regarded competitor out of Nova Uniao. However, Bravo would next be facing Royler Gracie. A largely unlabeled American brown belt approaching his mid-thirties, against the greatest 66kg competitor in the sport's history? The result was surely a foregone conclusion.

in 2000, but his achievement was (and has remained) a rarity. Even today, only Rafael Lovato Jr, Robert Drysdale,

FEW EXPECTATIONS RESTED ON THE SHOULDERS OF A JEAN JACQUES MACHADO BROWN BELT COMPETING AT THE 2003 EVENT, A MAN WHO ENTERED THE WORLD AS EDGAR CANO. HE BECAME RATHER BETTER KNOWN AS EDDIE BRAVO

**EDDIE BRAVO SPENT 48% OF THE MATCH
FIGHTING FROM HIS HALF GUARD**

THE MATCH

Visibly nervous, Bravo dropped straight to the mat, scooting towards Royler. He eventually managed to pull Royler into his half guard, working on head control. Royler passed with his patented knee cut, but his side control was loose, enabling Bravo to roll back on top. He didn't stay there long, as Royler drove through to the top a few seconds later while Bravo backed away.

Bravo re-established half guard, which Royler almost instantly passed. Yet he didn't count on Bravo's flexibility: the American was able to hook his foot by Royler's hip, using that control to gain butterfly guard. It was at this point that the rubber guard Bravo is best known for made an appearance, though to little effect.

After attempting a triangle set-up, Bravo locked in closed guard, but his legs slipped down low on the Brazilian's body. Sensing a lack of control, Royler exploded into a guard pass. However, Bravo caught him a second time with that same escape to butterfly guard. He got Royler's wrist and pushed out Gracie's arm, providing him with the space he needed to move into a classic triangle entry.

Royler tried to stack his opponent, but Bravo rolled with it, curling his body, never letting go of that triangle. Royler sat to his butt, pulling on Bravo's knee. It was too late: almost imperceptibly, Royler tapped.

MATCH LENGTH: 8 MINS 30 SECS **LOCATION:** SAO PAULO, BRAZIL
DATE: 17TH MAY 2003 **EVENT:** ADCC 2003
VENUE: GINÁSIO DO IBIRAPUERA **ATTENDANCE:** 5,000



AFTERMATH

Nobody was more surprised than Eddie Bravo at the victory. He answered the Brazilian interviewer in a daze, eyes wet. "He's a legend. I can't believe I won. I can't believe I won." He would be knocked out of the ADCC by Leo Vieira in the next round (Vieira went on to win gold). As Bravo put it in an interview with Total-MMA.com, fighting again after beating Royler was "like winning the Super Bowl, then having to win again." His head was no longer in the game. It didn't matter. Bravo's victory over Royler was undoubtedly the making of him. As the first American to defeat Royler Gracie, he now had the notoriety he needed to establish and build his own team, 10th Planet Jiu Jitsu.

Initially, the rhetoric coming out of that team, denigrating the gi (something Bravo dismissed as "an ancient Asian superhero outfit") and making bold claims about Bravo's 'revolutionary' approach, were ridiculed. Though he always attracted a certain segment of the market, reaching them through his books (especially *Mastering the Rubber Guard*) and later his DVDs, 10th Planet was outside of the mainstream. Bravo was somewhat bitter about what he perceived as a lack of recognition after the Abu Dhabi victory, writing in the introduction to *Mastering the Rubber Guard*:

"I didn't expect the gi lovers to jump for joy, but I truly thought they would admit I was onto something. Instead, they did their best to sweep my victory under the rug. It was the largest upset in Abu Dhabi history, and they simply ignored it. I figured the American jiu-jitsu press would at least give me some props in the magazines, but that never happened either."

Things have changed since then, in large part due to another match between Bravo and Royler. This time the stage was Metamoris III. Though Bravo did not submit Royler, he dominated the fight: Royler was forced on the defensive, using his incredible flexibility (something he and Bravo have in common) to his advantage. While Royler's game looked much the same as it did in 2003, Bravo's performance proved he had grown a great deal in the last decade. The BJJ community was impressed.

He then compounded that goodwill by establishing the Eddie Bravo Invitational, which has further raised the profile of both Bravo and his team. He was able to use EBI to showcase some of the rising stars at 10th Planet, like Geo Martinez. Along with other new promotions like Polaris, the Eddie Bravo Invitational has become a premium submission only event. It has been a long wait, but the day when a student produced by 10th Planet Jiu Jitsu manages to surpass Bravo's achievement and win the ADCC looks to be getting closer.

SOURCES: BRAVO, EDDIE, *THE TWISTER* [DVD] • BRAVO, EDDIE, *MASTERING THE RUBBER GUARD* (LAS VEGAS, NV: VICTORY BELT, 2006) • BRAVO, EDDIE, *MASTERING THE TWISTER* (LAS VEGAS, NV: VICTORY BELT, 2007) • THEFIGHTWORKSPODCAST.COM • WWW.SLIDEYFOOT.COM • WWW.HIGHTIMES.COM • WWW.TOTAL-MMA.COM •

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POSITION STUDY

THE OMOPLATA

THE OMOPLATA APPEARED IN BRAZIL EITHER THROUGH JUDO OR CATCH WRESTLING, BOTH POPULAR FIGHTING STYLES DURING THE 1930S AND 1940S. THE POSITION WAS NOT SEEN AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IN THE EARLY DAYS, BUT WAS PART OF THE CURRICULUM TAUGHT BY MOST JIU JITSU ACADEMIES.



When interviewed for this piece, Otavio 'Peixotinho' one of the great Carlson Gracie students of the 1970s and 1980s stated that:

"The omoplata existed, but it lacked effectiveness. It was something you'd try in training, but not at competitions. I saw Rickson and Rolls compete many times and even they wouldn't put it to use."

Firstly with the 'submission only' style competitions - and later due to the rigid jiu jitsu rules established by the Rio de Janeiro federation in the early 1970s - the omoplata was regarded as a submission move only. It was not seen as a set up for a sweep, so remained dormant in the competitive scene for almost seven decades. It was only in 1994, when the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Confederation (CBJJ) re-opened the rulebook allowing points for this situation, that the omoplata started being seen as a good option for a reversal.

The change in the rules of jiu jitsu's sporting environment coincided with the growth in popularity of this ancient technique, a growth led by one competitor who revolutionised the guard game during the 1990s, Mr Antonio 'Nino' Schembri.

Schembri opened the eyes of many fighters to the efficiency of the position, using it as a set up not only for sweeps, but also armbars, chokes and other

"THE OMOPLATA EXISTED, BUT IT LACKED EFFECTIVENESS. IT WAS SOMETHING YOU'D TRY IN TRAINING, BUT NOT AT COMPETITIONS"
- OTAVIO 'PEIXOTINHO'

developments. Since the improvements made by Nino, many more have added their input, making the omoplata one of the most utilised attacks in modern day jiu jitsu.

WORDS: ANDRE BORGES, EDITOR AT WWW.BJJHEROES.COM

BELT PROMOTIONS

IF YOU WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE AWARDED A NEW BELT RECENTLY, THIS PAGE REPRESENTS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SAVOUR THE MOMENT WITH RECOGNITION IN JIU JITSU STYLE! SEND IN DETAILS OF YOUR RECENT PROMOTION, INCLUDING THE RANK YOU ACHIEVED AND YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, AND WE WILL PUBLISH AS MANY AS WE CAN IN OUR MAGAZINE.

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Fernando Latorre was promoted to blue belt by Chen Moraes at Anaconda BJJ academy, Barcelona.



Ollie Dillon, Martin Fernandes and Dominic Dillon were all promoted to purple belt at Norwich BJJ by Baruc Martin and Tito Beltran.



Jiu Jitsu Style contributor, Matt Jardine, received his purple belt from Mauricio Gomes and Roger Gracie.



Nora Malchin receives her blue belt from Franjo Artukovic, Dominik Artukovic, Nico Penzer and Renato Migliaccio. at Stallion Gym, Artukovic Jiu Jitsu, in Stuttgart, Germany.



Joshua Bull was promoted to blue belt by Nick Brooks and Roger Gracie black belt, Luc Lamude.



Alex Cannon received his purple belt from Arlans Siqueira (Arlans Siqueira Cheshire BJJ).



A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

THE DREADED INJURY LAY OFF...

After over eight years of training, it finally happened. I suffered my first extensive injury lay off, which left me **genuinely worried for my sanity.**

Like any jiu jitsu practitioner I've had my fair share of minor injuries: a bloody nose, hyper-extended limbs (I did eventually learn to tap), sprained fingers and cauliflower ears. As you'll all know, these relatively minor injuries do little in the way of keeping you away from training; they're more of an inconvenience if anything else. As fate would have it, what eventually kept me away from the mats for my first extensive lay off was a fall during judo practice.

Having fallen awkwardly during judo randori and experiencing a sharp pain in my lower back, I stumbled through the rest of the session feeling like I was constantly winded. After peeing blood for 36 hours, being admitted to hospital for two days, getting diagnosed with renal trauma and ordered away from training for six weeks, I started to think of other ways to amuse myself.

Our resident BJJ Doctor, Braulio Estima, has addressed the issue of developing your BJJ away from actual training in our last mag, so I dug through my back issues and sought out his words of wisdom. Though I still felt depressed by the prospect of no rolling or any physical

exertion for such a long time, I was also excited by the prospect of watching, reading and reflecting on as much BJJ content as I could get my hands on.

I decided to use my new found spare time to research some of my favourite athletes and their standout techniques in an attempt to head back to the mats with plenty of new material to work on. It was not only great fun watching highlights, reading blogs and searching for new content, but it also helped me think about the sort of grappler I aspire to be. Instead of coming home from a training session reflecting on the obvious areas I needed to work on, watching and reading content helped me think more about the additional areas I'd LIKE to work on.

Obviously we need to be mindful of addressing the flaws that live sparring unearths, but I think it can be equally important to maintain an idea of the skills you wish to learn. For example, though I'm a brown belt my attacking leglock game is still very limited, but I don't often come away from a training session reflecting on this in my game because I can work around it.

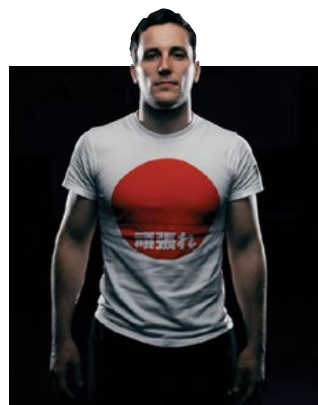
However, after watching and reading content from the likes of Eddie Cummings and Dean Lister, I have a new-found desire to look at this whole new area of potential development.

At the time of writing I'm due back to training in the next few days for the first time since the injury, and I can honestly say this has turned into a really positive experience. My hunger for development has grown greater than ever and – if it is possible – I think I'm in love with the gentle art even more. If you're facing a lengthy layoff from the mats, my advice would be to use this as a time to reflect on your journey so far, figure out where you want to grow as a grappler and work hard to keep jiu jitsu in your life even when you can't practise it.

Thanks for picking up our latest issue, and keep training!

Callum

CALLUM MEDCRAFT



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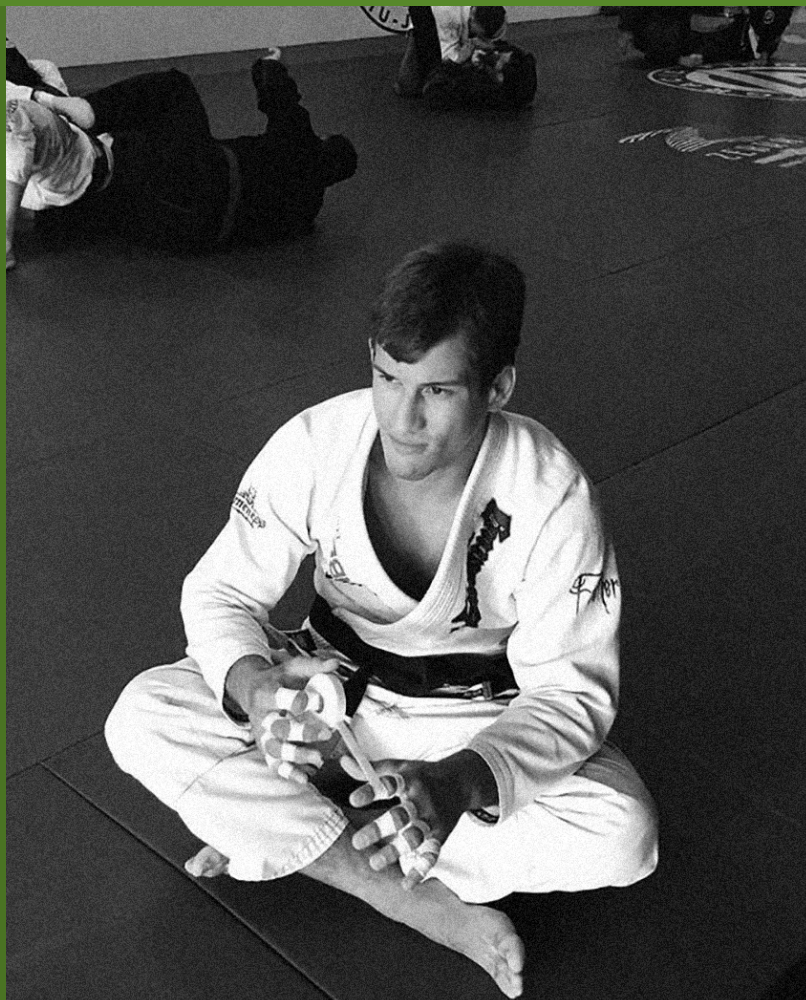
As our brand continues to grow,
so will our never ending quest to produce
the best gi in the world. The Classic 2.0 is our USA made kimono
that was inspired by our classic fit kimono,
which has been our staple design for many years. The theory behind this
project was very simple, take our classic fit and make little improvements
to make it better and
manufacture it in our home state of CALIFORNIA.

IT'S SCIENCE

BY TYLER BISHOP

OSVALDO MOIZINHO

OSVALDO "QUEIXINHO" MOIZINHO IS A SOUL FIGHTER'S BLACK BELT AND ONE OF THE MOST TECHNICAL FIGHTERS COMPETING IN THE -70KG DIVISION. HAVING TRAINED EXTENSIVELY WITH CAIO TERRA, QUEIXINHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS EXCELLENT USE OF THE DE LA RIVA GUARD AND PRECISE, VERSATILE PASSING AND SUBMISSIONS.



**QUEIXINHO'S AVERAGE
MATCH LENGTH WAS
6 MINS 52 SECONDS**



'It's Science' is brought to you by BishopBjj.com. The goal of BishopBjj.com is to expand and empower the jiu jitsu community by emphasising the science and art of jiu jitsu in fun and exciting ways. We want to highlight what makes jiu jitsu so calculated, but also what makes it so much fun.

71%

**OF QUEIXINHO'S WINS
WERE BY SUBMISSION**

**QUEIXINHO GAINED MOST
SUCCESS FROM STANDING
GUARD PASSES**



60%

OF HIS SWEEPS CAME FROM THE
OPEN GUARD

78%

OF HIS PASSES OCCURRED
FROM STANDING

HE SCORED FIRST IN
10 OF HIS 11 WINS

THE BREAKDOWN

There are some names that fly just under the radar in BJJ, and one of the guys that has to be mentioned in this category is Osvaldo "Queixinho" Moizinho. Many will recognise him from his successful battles with Joao and Paulo Miyao this year, but Queixinho has been a dominant force in the featherweight division for years now, and the most interesting thing about him may be the diversity in his game.

THE STUDY

Queixinho first came to prominence several years ago with a quick footlock win over UFC star Nate Diaz. Since then the young Brazilian has proven himself to be a top IBJJF competitor to watch. What makes watching him so much fun is seeing just how well-rounded his game is.

In the matches we viewed Queixinho had an impressive 73% win rate. His submission rate in those wins ended up being around 72%! This is no easy feat. What's even more impressive is that

73%

OF QUEIXINHO'S MATCHES
ENDED IN VICTORY

TOTAL MATCHES OBSERVED	15
TOTAL MINUTES OBSERVED	104
MATCHES WON BY SUBMISSION	08
MATCHES WON BY POINTS	03
OPPONENT WON MATCH	04
TOTAL MATCHES DRAWN	00
TOTAL MATCHES WON	11

he found a way to get those submissions in seven different ways. That's the greatest submission diversity we've seen in any of our studies.

Queixinho's entire game is diverse; we witnessed him employ different strategies for each opponent. In fact, the only technique he successfully used more than twice in the entire study was de La Riva guard. He does a very good job of deflecting and shutting down the berimbolo of his opponents, and even countered with his own on one or two occasions. His sweep to pass ratio was almost dead even (10/9). When he went to sweep, he would often rely on various open guards, with de La Riva being the most popular. When passing, he really kept his opponents guessing; while nearly 80% of his passes were from standing, he varied his approaches considerably. In the study, he was able to execute seven different styles of passes.

What's important to keep in mind is that in most of our studies we see a strong prevalence of a "game". Queixinho seems able to tailor his approach depending on his opponent. Whether this is done subconsciously or on purpose, his style

ABSTRACT:

All matches observed of Osvaldo "Queixinho", used in this small sample occurred at IBJJF events, inside of his weight division, and in the years 2011-2015. Only techniques, occurrences, and outcomes that were recorded are displayed in the data below (i.e. if no butterfly sweeps occurred, there will not be a representation of that in the sample data charts). Matches were selected at random based on freely available matches. This is a limited sample but – given the estimated amount of matches in this time period – it is well above the percentage necessary to create a scientifically validated trend sampling.



is dynamic nonetheless. He found success passing, sweeping, and submitting in more different ways than anyone else we've studied.

Ultimately, what's most impressive about Queixinho is how dynamic his submission game is; he was able to nab a lot of different kinds of submissions from many different positions. While many athletes we've studied have found success from minimising their toolkit, Queixinho seems to thrive with a broad approach.

Queixinho has yet to win a world championship, but with the exit of Gui Mendes from the division and his recent success over the Miyao brothers, Queixinho has to be a favourite for a 2016 world title. He is certainly an athlete to follow.

QUEIXINHO FINISHED 7 DIFFERENT
KINDS OF SUBMISSIONS

SWEEP (POSITION)

DE LA RIVA	4
50/50	2
HALF GUARD	2
SPIDER GUARD	1
OPEN GUARD	1

SWEEP (TYPE)

ANKLE PICK	2
TOMANAGI	2
SCISSOR	1
TRIPS/OFF-BALANCING	1
SIT-UP AND OVERTAKE OPPONENT	1
BERIMBOLO	3

SUMMARY

SUCCESSES: STANDING GUARD PASSES

AVOIDED: BOTTOM HALF GUARD

TOP TECHNIQUES: STANDING GUARD PASSES & DE LA RIVA

PASS (POSITION)

HALF-GUARD	2
STANDING	7

PASS (TYPE)

LEG DRAG	1
KNEE THROUGH	1
X-PASS	2
BULLFIGHTER	2
LEG-WEAVE	1
KNEE CUT FROM HALF GUARD	1
REVERSE SITTING HALF GUARD	1

TAKING THE BACK

SIDE CONTROL	1
FROM PASSING THE GUARD	2

SUBMISSION (POSITION)

BACK	2
SIDE CONTROL	1
MOUNT	1
HALF-GUARD TOP	1
DE LA RIVA	1
50/50	1
MISC	1

SUBMISSION (TYPE)

CHOKE FROM BACK	2
KIMURA/AMERICANA	1
ARMBAR	1
CROSS COLLAR TOP	1
LEGLOCK	1
NECK CHOKE (GUILLOTINE, BRABO, ETC.)	1
OMOPLATA	1

HISTORY 101:

ROY HARRIS TEAM

The United States was the starting point for jiu jitsu's international expansion, initially due to Rorion Gracie's second attempt to establish a US foothold in 1978, which accelerated in the late '80s with the release of *Gracie Jiu Jitsu in Action* and subsequent instructional videos. The major catalyst arrived in 1993 with the UFC, but by that point the legendary Dirty Dozen group comprising the first non-Brazilian black belts had already been training for years. The first of them to reach black belt, Craig Kukuk and Ken Gabrielson, earned their rank in 1992, a year before Royce stepped into the Octagon.

There are multiple versions of the Dirty Dozen list, with some debate about the order, but Roy Harris can lay claim to a place. Like a number of other early adopters, Harris had a long background in other martial arts before encountering Brazilian jiu jitsu. He counts an impressive twenty-seven different disciplines on his website,

ranging from familiar styles like judo, aikido and boxing through to rather more esoteric names, like sho shin ti karate and balintawak.

That all began in 1981, as Harris documented in a fascinating thread on *The Underground* back in 2001. He writes that after reading *Bruce Lee's Fighting Methods: Basic Training*, he headed off to a wing chun class. Unimpressed, he moved on to jeet kune do with Rick Faye in Minnesota until 1986 (due to a move to California). Faye recommended Harris try Dan Inosanto and Paul Vunak, who in keeping with the original precepts of JKD were always looking to expand their knowledge.

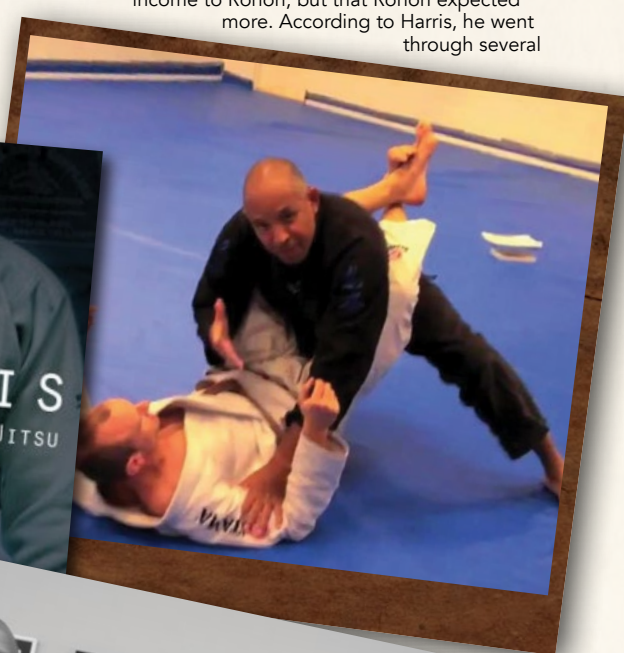
As you might expect from an open-minded martial arts school in California at that time, word about the Gracies training over in Torrance had got around:

"A friend of mine who was training at the Inosanto Academy told me

about these Brazilian guys who were awesome on the ground. Up until that point in time, I only had a minimal interest in ground fighting. However, my friend showed me what it was all about. We sparred in the parking lot outside of the Academy. He took me to the pavement and choked me in about ten seconds flat. Now, keep in mind my friend weighed 50 lbs less than I did. Needless to say, I was impressed. No one had ever done that to me before, so I knew he was onto something. I went driving through Torrance in search of the new Gracie Academy."

Though Harris has since voiced his regrets at publicly sharing his early recollections of BJJ (it's a remarkably honest account), it remains a valuable insight into a very different world. Back in the early '90s, BJJ was a closed-off environment where training was hard to come by, knowledge tightly held by a handful of Brazilians. His first classes were with Rorion and Royler, in the winter of 1990.

After only thirteen lessons with Royler, Harris was presented with a blue belt. He was also teaching self defence classes at the time, over at the University of California (which also led to a year training in sambo with Nikolay Baturin). That would eventually lead to a falling out with the Gracie Academy over money in 1992, as Harris was being paid by the University. Harris states that he was already passing some of that income to Rorion, but that Rorion expected more. According to Harris, he went through several



lic success against all-comers was to be the Brazilian jiu jitsu's global expansion, raising Brazil, then in later incarnations of Gracie Jiu Jitsu, and then in later incarnations of Gracie Jiu Jitsu. A succession of demonstrations would continue to demonstrate the power of the Gracie Jiu Jitsu system. The original Rickson Gracie Jiu Jitsu team covered in future issues.

TIMELINE

1981

Harris starts training in wing chun, inspired by Bruce Lee

1986

Harris moves to California, having trained JKD in Minnesota

**1990**

Harris enrolls at the Gracie Academy

1993

Harris begins training with Joe Moreira in Newport Beach

1998

Moreira promotes Harris to black belt

2009

Harris promotes Sheila Bird to black belt



instructors after that, but all of them cut ties because of unfounded rumours circulating about him. Eventually, he found an instructor ready to hear his side of the story: Joe Moreira. Harris has stuck with Moreira ever since, receiving his purple belt in 1994, brown belt in 1996, and finally the black belt in 1998.

Noted for his heavily structured approach to teaching, Harris produced a clear set of criteria that had to be met before he would rank a student. This formal approach remains rare in BJJ and is not suited to everybody, but Harris was among the first to bring that level of specificity to the grading process (his students have continued that process, perhaps most notably Roy Dean). It is something that can also be seen in his instructional tapes, where again Harris was something of a pioneer. He created a set designed for the older grappler, *BJJ Over 40*, as well as DVDs that cover grip fighting for BJJ and takedowns from the knees. His first instructional tapes, *BJJ 101*, arrived in the '90s, when there were barely any Americans in the market (Craig Kukuk is among the few to have preceded Harris).

Sheila Bird began training in the same year Harris gained his black belt. Her interest was piqued by her then-boyfriend Brian Bird, a keen martial artist who started BJJ in 1995. He was always asking Sheila if he could practise what

he had learned once he got home. After years of being Brian's 'training dummy', she eventually felt motivated to sign up for classes at his school (which became a Roy Harris affiliate in 2001).

Within a year of starting BJJ, Bird was already good enough to win bronze in the men's absolute division at a small local tournament. An avid competitor, Bird has over 100 grappling matches, as well as a 3-0 record in MMA. She was awarded her black belt from Harris in 2009, having won the FILA Grappling Worlds event the previous year (she won the gi division three years in a row). Sheila currently teaches at the school she co-owns with her husband Brian (he is now a third degree black belt under Harris), Champions Creed in Calgary.

To finish with the words of Roy Harris black belt, Chris Martell: "Along the way, I had my eyes opened to more martial arts concepts and microscopic details than I could ever have imagined. Mr. Harris sees the matrix."

SOURCES: ROYHARRIS.COM • STICKGRAPPLER.NET • FIGHTERGIRLS.NET • AWAKENINGFIGHTERS.COM • CHAMPIONSCREED.CA • SLIDEYFOOT.COM • MODERNSELFDEFENCE.COM • MIXEDMARTIALARTS.COM



QUIT THE JOB, CHASE THE DREAM

A Chico Mendes brown belt since July, London Fight Factory's Samantha Cook has had a barnstormer of a debut year at **faixa marrom**.

Having secured a place at the Abu Dhabi Pro Finals next year, quickly followed by becoming a World Nogi Champion, we caught up with Sam to talk success, being a role model, leaving a competitive profession and generally seeing how the cookie really crumbles.

Hi Sam, can you tell us a little about your life before you decided to take up jiu jitsu full time?

I started training in 2008 or 2009 under Italo Ferreira, I got my blue belt under Italo before he moved to Abu Dhabi, so we had Chico (Mendes) come over. He changed the gym and I continued to train with him.

However, I recently moved to London to fulfil a mission of full time training. With Chico moving at the time and creating the new academy, there was a vibe that many of the people trained part time. I was working as a physio, living in Cheltenham and commuting to Bristol to train every night. I'd go straight after work and then not get back home until late.

I went to the Europeans for the first time in 2014 and won it as a purple belt and decided to leave my job to train full time. I thought 'why not? You have the rest of your life to work and I'd really like to see how this goes as a career.' I handed my notice in at work, left and started training full time. As I did that, I injured my knee and was out for six months, I had no job, no sick pay and no jiu jitsu – it was a miserable time in my life!

Anyway, in the September-ish I came back, competed at the London Open and I didn't do very well. I needed the full time training, so as much as I had fantastic training and partners in Bristol, I felt like I had a different mindset towards what I wanted to do. It was more than a hobby to me, so I spoke with Chico and explained; I'd already trained with Luiz ('Manxinha' Ribeiro) so it was the most natural progression.

Physiotherapy is a notoriously competitive field, so was it difficult to leave something you'd worked so hard to get in to?

I managed to get in at university to study it on a course of only 70-100 people and in Bristol where it's extremely competitive, graduating in 2011.

I worked from 2011-2014 between Cheltenham and Gloucester and I just decided I liked training full time and it was an

avenue I should explore where I can, because I have my degree and previous hard work to fall back on. If I could switch the work to part time, like I'm trying to get now in London, I could keep my foot in the door.

I enjoyed it, but the work with sprains and strains, it wasn't too satisfying and I didn't really believe I was helping people, so I specialised in respiratory physio where I helped people on intensive care, cystic fibrosis sufferers, people where I could make a difference.

Well, as a world champion in jiu jitsu and working in physio, it's a similar kind of story to Janni Larsson. She's a world champion, working in medicine and she's also your good friend! Tell us about your frequent trips to Denmark.

Yes, she's my very good friend. So I originally did a Europeans training camp in Copenhagen under Shimon Mochizuki. I started speaking with Shanti (Abelha) before I'd met them, she told me Janni would be there, Camila (Hansen), Ida Hansson and I was like 'man this is going to be great training for me!'

I spoke with Chico and he told me it would be excellent for me. I did my first camp there for my first Europeans, which was very successful as I won. Janni and I since then have trained together lots – my whole game is based around, and similar, to hers. She was awesome, she took time to show me things, drill with me; everyone was awesome there but in particular Janni seemed to stand out. She would smash me and it would be so effortless, it left me wanting to learn from her.

In particular, her spider, x-guard and footlock game was something I thought I could use. We drilled a lot and when Michelle Nicolini came to train with us at LSF, we rolled a little bit and Michelle asked me if I'd been training with Janni! She told me we had very similar styles.

Your success on the mat and level of jiu jitsu has now led to you teaching seminars, so tell us a little about how you find that experience?

So I did my first ever seminar in November before I went to the Worlds and it was really, really successful, I was so pleased. 21 girls turned out, girls who'd I'd never met from clubs I'd never been to – I spotted some familiar faces but there was a lot of novice girls. It really surprised me!

When I was a blue belt, even a purple belt, I was still getting smashed and something didn't feel right about it, but then one day it kind of just clicked. This is what I want to get across to people when I teach, I want them to know it's achievable.

So how do you think your enthusiasm fits in with your work in promoting women's BJJ in the UK? Not sure if there's a competition photo out there where you don't have a smile on your face!

[Laughs] That's what I want people to know me by. You have the ups and downs of BJJ, competitions all the time, and still have a smile on your face and stay humble – that's me. Most people who spend time around me will pretty much know I'm laughing all the time and it's usually the loudest laugh in the room.

It's a competitive sport, but we do this because we love it, right? I'm training every day, getting smashed, getting beat up but you know what, I'm smiling because I love what we do and others can be like that too. I want to be as helpful and approachable as possible and if me being



happy helps that then I wouldn't have it any other way.

The number of women training BJJ is constantly on the rise, but quite often the numbers turning up at competitions aren't there yet – any thought on why this is?
It's difficult to say. I've spoken with Lawrence at BJJ247 who'd been offering Europeans prize packages. I said that he should think about offering a package for women at brown and purple, after he already offered one to white and blue belts, and he did that, but only one girl signed up, which made me really sad to see.

It can't be about the prize offers, because the prize offers are there. The competitions aren't



too far away either, they're all over the UK and anywhere is accessible if you plan your competition trip properly.

I don't know; for me, I tend to plan for the big tournaments in the Europeans, Pans and Worlds but in the UK, we have the UKBJJA now using a ranking system so rankings are covered here in the UK. It's really difficult to say, because there are the numbers in the gyms and a lot of people talk - even Dan Strauss was saying about Kleos Grappling that the girls wanted their own war hammers. He said 'okay, I can give you a war hammer but we need you to get a minimum amount of female competitors,' and then people didn't really sign up.

It's tricky, is there a stigma attached to it that we haven't quite outgrown yet? The girls know that when it comes to the Europeans and the biggest competitions, yes they're expensive, but you'll get a minimum amount of 3-4 fights and at white and blue, it's massive. There are loads of people registered - that wasn't there when I was competing at blue, maybe they're saving themselves financially and physically.

Is it a double edged sword? More people registered could intimidate you out of signing up yourself, but on the other hand, there are people who will only register when others do.

I would agree. It's difficult because of types of competitors.

Is it a case of, do you want to win a medal by having one fight, or do you want to earn a medal by having four?

Maybe it will start with the big tournaments first and then filter down to the national, regional and local tournaments. I would encourage people to compete all the time. People get very nervous, that's okay, I used to get nervous too. But it's like, competition is such a small part of your training, you will do things in training that you won't do in competition. In competition you will stick to what you know, you will avoid being that little bit reckless and doing fancy stuff if you're going to give something away.

So maybe with the girls, it's people feeling like they're not ready, but do you know what? Other than training with my team mates at the gym and within competing, you learn so much more in competition. You can have some hard lessons on the competition mats and trust me I've had them, but when I compete and I make a mistake I will never make them again.

If you cast your mind back to white or blue belt Sam Cook, talking to her as a brown belt world champion, what message would YOU want to hear?

The message I would want to hear and the message I would give? Easy. It is achievable and it is doable. Even if you don't train full time and you just train with guys, or you're not in the best position to travel to competitions - experience different training, which I think can help a game quite a lot.

It's just to know that if you stick with it then it will pay off. Okay, I fight between weights and I'm trying to stay at middle. I'm not the smallest girl but I'm not the biggest girl, so it isn't like I'm some monster girl in the gym who can smash through any opponent - I still get beaten up every day and it's that reassurance that even though you're getting crushed, or that technique isn't working, just keep going.

Try and get some self-training in. If there's a women's open mat, go to it, or if there's a woman centric seminar, go and learn. Just test yourself and just try and compete. Like I said, I want to be the approachable girl who's always smiling and laughing because that is me and I hope it comes across to people too. It's not unachievable to reach a high level at a sacrifice of happiness and relaxation.

We all have our fan girl moments, if you meet Michelle Nicolini, Mackenzie Dern or Bia Mesquita. It's easy to think 'oh my god, this isn't achievable and it's so far away,' but it's not. It's easy to forget that these people were white and blue belts once.

I recently saw a picture of Shanti in a purple belt on the podium; it took me by surprise because it's easy to think that these people have always been black belts. It's so close, the belt gaps may be far apart but you will get your reward back from what you put in and it will be the best thing you've ever done.

I hope that my story so far is a success story. I had a full time career and I left everything to go into a difficult sport where I knew I would make no money from it. So, I hope people look at me and see that making sacrifices, leaving your job, moving in with your parents - they're not steps backwards and they can help you get to where you really want to be.

It's working, this year alone since getting my brown belt I have won tickets to Abu Dhabi by winning the trials; I went to Finland, fought in nogi and won a ticket to the Worlds - If one person says, 'well if she can do it, I can do it', then I have helped and I will be happy.

I'm not super human, none of us are, I just enjoy what I do, have fun, train hard and it pays off.

SAMANTHA COOK

Sam is a reigning IBJJF middleweight Nogi World Champion



"It's a competitive sport, but we do this because we love it, right? I'm training every day, getting smashed, getting beat up but you know what, I'm smiling because I love what we do and others can be like that too"



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FIGHTWORX ACADEMY JUNIORS

Fightworx Academy is based in Torquay and as of November 2015 it is home to three **Junior European champions**.

The highly decorated Fightworx junior team is run by brown belt Vikki Todd, under head instructor and black belt, Darren Yeoman. In this article, I introduce you to three of the most avid competitors from the Fightworx Academy junior team; Madison Murphy, Kasey Lyon and Mario Schiano.

Hi guys, please introduce yourselves

Madi: I'm 14, a yellow belt with two tabs and have been training BJJ for a year and a half.

Kasey: I'm 14 too, an orange belt, and I'll have been training three years in February.

Mario: I'm 15 years old and a green belt. I've been training at Fightworx Academy for almost six years.

What has been your biggest achievement to date?

Madi: It would probably have to be winning the Junior National Championships in March 2015. This was my first competition and I had only been training for a couple of months. I was against people who were a lot more experienced than me.

Kasey: Winning gold at the recent Junior European Championships.

Mario: My attendance at training. I think I've missed about four sessions due to illness in five years.

Who do you look up to?

Madi: My instructor Vikki Todd. She puts so much effort into teaching myself and the other juniors. She does so much more than is expected of her.

Kasey: People taller than me, ha! Nah, Hannah Gorman and Vikki Todd.

Mario: Rafael Mendes and Cobrinha. Also my dad, who never stops talking about jiu jitsu!

What has been your most memorable moment since you began training?

Madi: Winning the Junior Nationals this year.

Kasey: I recently defeated a girl at the Junior Europeans who had been selected to represent the Junior Elite Squad at the kids Pan Ams. I won gold in my category.

Mario: I was really proud to win gold at the 2015 European Championships. It was my last big tournament as a junior as I'll be in the juvenile division next year.

BJJ is more than just a sport. What has BJJ taught you about yourself?

Madi: BJJ has made me much more confident in myself and it has taught me not to be afraid to put myself out there.

Kasey: How to defend myself.

Mario: That discipline and hard work brings rewards.



Talk us through your training. Does it differ in the build up to a competition?

Madi: I train on Tuesdays, when I also help coach the kids class. I also train on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays. So, five times a week. When preparing for competitions I train every day as well as participating in the adult classes. I also do circuit training and go to the gym to build up my strength. I put a lot of effort into getting myself ready!

Kasey: At the moment I'm training one or two days a week but before competitions I train about five times a week.

Mario: I train at the junior and adult class. There is no difference in my preparation, I always train hard!

What has been your hardest or most challenging competitive fight?

Madi: It would probably have been when I fought Kasey at the final of the British Open. It was such an even and close match and it was a real struggle as we both knew each other's games so well!

Kasey: I fought Charli Simkin two years ago at the British Championships. That was a hard match!

Mario: My hardest fight is always in my head. I suffer from a lot of anxiety and nerves before a fight.

Favourite guard?

Madi: De la Riva guard, mainly because there are so many different options you have from that guard.

Kasey: Yeah, I like the overhead sweeps from de La Riva guard.

Mario: De La Riva.

Favourite submission?

Madi: Probably the kimura. I'm always looking for it from every position!

Kasey: I like that choke from mount where you grab your own gi and then put it under their neck before spinning round to north south.

Mario: Rear naked chokes and triangles.

What do you love most about training Jiu Jitsu at Fightworx?

Madi: Fightworx is such a friendly environment, with brilliant teachers and the people are amazing. They're all so supportive and always help me out. I've learned and grown so much as a person and it's all down to the guys at Fightworx.

Kasey: Everyone is really friendly and it feels like a big family.

Mario: It's good fun, good vibes (because of great teammates) and the teachers are great as they encourage me to work hard and be the best that I can be!

FIGHTWORX JUNIORS

Madison Murphy

Kasey Lyon

Mario Schiano



"BJJ has made me much more confident in myself and it has taught me not to be afraid to put myself out there"

- Madison Murphy



WORDS: CALLUM MEDCRAFT



WE LOOK BACK AT A FANTASTIC 12 MONTHS OF BJJ

IT SEEMS A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN 12 MONTHS...

AS YOU'D EXPECT FROM SUCH AN EXCITING, PROGRESSIVE AND DEVELOPING SCENE AS BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU, 2015 DID ITS BEST TO SHOWCASE THE ATHLETES AND ORGANISATIONS STRIVING FOR GREATNESS. AS ALWAYS, WE WERE NOT LEFT DISAPPOINTED.

WE'VE SEEN STANDOUT PERFORMANCES FROM ATHLETES LIKE GARRY TONON AND MACKENZIE DERN, HUGE CAREER MILESTONES FOR RAFA MENDES AND BRUNO Malfacine, PLUS A WHOLE HOST OF CAPTIVATING MATCHES, EVENTS, SUBMISSIONS AND PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. IT'S BEEN TOUGH TO NARROW DOWN BUT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE GIVE YOU THE JIU JITSU STYLE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR.

THE GIANT KILLER: MACKENZIE DERN BEATS ALL-COMERS

Since gaining her black belt in 2012, Mackenzie Dern has been pushing the world's best and chasing gold medals at every major tournament. As fate would have it, the last twelve months have seen the 22 year-old hit the best form of her young career.

Despite a narrow (and somewhat controversial) defeat in the final of the 2015 European championships to Michelle Nicolini, and almost taking Gabi Garcia's back in the openweight final, it was clear that Dern had hit top gear for the competition season. Just three months after competing in Lisbon, Mackenzie found herself at the World Professional Jiu Jitsu Championships (WPJJC) in Abu Dhabi. It was in Abu Dhabi that she would rise to stardom.

The semi-final of the openweight division saw 55kg Mackenzie face Gabi Garcia, the unrivalled champion of women's jiu jitsu, who at over 6ft tall and weighing 90kg towered over everyone she fought. Against all odds, Mackenzie brought the crowd to their feet and eked out a narrow victory, dealing Garcia her first defeat in years. With this notable victory under her belt, she went on to claim gold in both her weight and openweight class.

June brought about further success and Dern's first IBJJF black belt world title. If victory in itself wasn't enough, her dominant performance and submission victory over the legendary Michelle Nicolini in the final was a real statement of intent from the youngster.

Mackenzie showed no signs of slowing down in the latter stages of the year. August saw FIVE Grappling hold their first ever Super League event, hosted at Studio 540 and inviting the best jiu jitsu athletes on the planet. Mackenzie blew away the opposition, securing submission victories in every match and going home \$10,000 richer.

Come November, Mackenzie racked up yet another black belt title, this time at the IBJJF Nogi World Championships. Despite losing in her weight class to Tammi Musumeci, she rallied in the openweight and ended up being crowned the champion, capping off an extraordinary season of competition that will be tough to beat in 2016.

THE MUSUMECIS: TAMMY AND MIKEY CLAIMING SCALPS

The sibling duo, Tammy and Mikey Musumeci, are two of the brightest young stars to enter the elite jiu jitsu circuit over the last couple of years.

Tammy first gained attention in 2014 after winning the IBJJF Pan Ams during her first year as a black belt. And who can forget her gutsy performance at the 2014 Worlds, where she refused to tap and tried to continue fighting in her final match against Michelle Nicolini, despite suffering from a dislocated shoulder.

It was at the 2015 IBJJF Nogi World Championships that Tammy claimed the biggest title of her career, and a sizeable scalp in the process. She defeated none other than Mackenzie Dern in the final of the featherweight division, solidifying her status amongst the elite and turning plenty of heads in the process.

If truth be told, Mikey Musumeci has been on the radar for quite some time. The 20 year-old won sequential world titles all the way from juvenile up to brown belt – quite an impressive feat. However, just like his sister, it was victory over a high profile black belt that raised his stock within the jiu jitsu community.



At the 2015 IBJJF American Nationals, Mikey faced Joao Miyao, setting up a showdown between two connoisseurs of the 'modern' game. After ten minutes of berimbolos, leg drags and footlocks, it was Musumeci who came away with the victory, leading to headlines such as 'The Man Who Miyao'd Miyao'.

The cumulative efforts of the Musumecis and their successes against the best in the sport represented great entertainment for the fans during the past 12 months, earning their place amongst our highlights.



RAFA ON TOP: RAFA MENDES CLAIMS

RECORD FIFTH FEATHERWEIGHT WORLD TITLE

What more can be said about this man? Though not the busiest season of competition from the Art of Jiu Jitsu co-founder, Rafa Mendes' decimation of the featherweight division at the IBJJF World Championships was enough to emphasise that he's truly reached a class of his own.

With the announcement that brother, Gui Mendes, would be retiring from competition in 2015, there was perhaps a hint of extra pressure being added to Rafa's shoulders. Holding four black belt world titles going into June, he was tied with the great Royler Gracie as the most decorated featherweight in IBJJF history, and there was an air of expectation surrounding Mendes as the World Championships began. As expected, he didn't disappoint.

In honesty, Mendes' run to gold barely saw him break a sweat. He racked up four submissions from four matches en route to the final, including a fantastically executed wristlock from the crucifix over Alliance's Mario Reis. As predicted, it would be his old adversary, Rubens Charles "Cobrinha" looking to stop Rafa in his tracks during the final.

Mendes and Cobrinha share perhaps one of the most heated rivalries in jiu jitsu, with emotions clear to see when they take to the mat. Though history suggested the 2015 final would be yet another close encounter, it was really nothing more than total dominance from the Atos man. Rafa ran away with the match 6-0, having never looked in danger and without conceding a single point in the entire competition. He now stands alone as the best featherweight in IBJJF history and, arguably, jiu jitsu's crowning jewel.

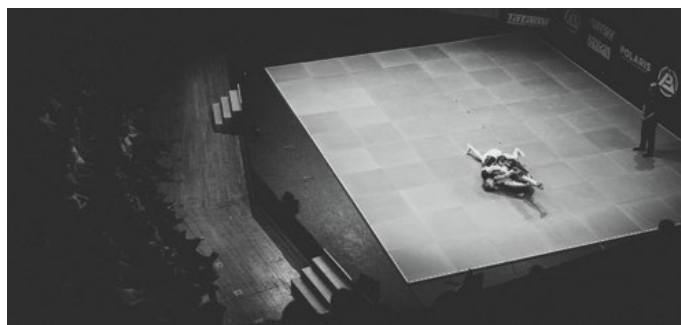
CLAUDIO CALASANS: FINALLY HAS HIS YEAR

After literally years of trying, Claudio Calasans finally had the season he'd no doubt been dreaming of ever since he started to compete. Though he'd reached the pinnacle of success at the Abu Dhabi WPJJJC, it was an IBJJF world title that he really craved. After finishing runner-up on numerous occasions, 2015 was finally his time.

Having disposed of Bruno Togni via submission, followed by Vinicius Marinho 6-4 in the quarter final, Calasans moved on to face Victor Estima once again. Coming off the back of a defeat to Estima at the WPJJJC earlier in the year, and with momentum from their recent encounters clearly against him, Claudio did exceptionally well to pick up a 4-2 victory and make it to the last two. After one final battle, he walked away with an 8-4 victory over Vitor Oliveira and the gold medal he'd been waiting for.

The final kicker for Calasans' competition season came in Sao Paulo, Brazil, at the Abu Dhabi Combat Club (ADCC). Knocked out in his weight class by Keenan Cornelius, it was in the openweight that Claudio would triumph and produce arguably the surprise result of the tournament.

Having defeated Gabriel Lucas, Vinny Magalhaes, Yuri Simoes and Joao Rocha on his route to openweight gold, there's no argument that Claudio deserves his plaudits as the ADCC Champion. That said, plenty were left disappointed by his path to gold, with the Atos fighter not scoring a single point or submission during his matches, instead relying on penalties and referee decisions. However you look at it, 2015 will still show Claudio Calasans as IBJJF World Champion and ADCC Openweight Champion.



THE BIRTH OF POLARIS PRO:

PRO JIU JITSU AT ITS MOST EXCITING

With Metamoris seeming hell bent on imploding, there was a clear void to be filled within the professional jiu jitsu circuit, so we were super excited to hear about the launch of Polaris Pro.

A joint venture between the prominent jiu jitsu brands, Tatami Fightwear and Scramble, Polaris Pro promised not only to offer amazing match ups between legendary athletes, but it would also take place in the UK – a testament to the growth of BJJ in Europe.

Polaris Pro 1 included some amazing matches, with a perfect mix of fresh young talent and iconic figures from the past on the card. We were just as excited to see Mike Fowler vs. Eduardo Telles as we were Keenan Cornelius vs. Dean Lister. And then you throw in the likes of Garry Tonon vs. Marcin Held and Michelle Nicolini vs. Angelica Galvao – it was sure to be a success.

The best part of it all was that, come show time, the athletes didn't disappoint, and there was a healthy 50% submission rate across all matches. The bar had been set high, but Polaris Pro 2 was set to take things to the next level.

It's no overstatement to say that Polaris Pro's second event was probably the best night of submission grappling we've ever seen. Six of the eight matches ended via submission, but it was arguably the two that didn't culminate in a finish that were the most entertaining!

Robson Moura and Baret Yoshida's back and forth battle saw both fighters escaping tight submissions and continuously pushing a frantic pace. The other draw saw AJ Agazarm and Daniel Strauss put on the most entertaining fight of the night. The grappling was intense and dynamic, while emotions and gamesmanship between the two athletes had the crowd going wild – you could have easily mistaken this for a pro wrestling match. With two epic shows under their belt, we are foaming at the mouth with anticipation for Polaris Pro 3.

THE RISE OF GARRY TONON:

THE SUB ONLY FIGHTER MAKING WAVES

Having made a name for himself via his exploits on Lloyd Irvin's 'BJJ Kumite' a number of years ago, Garry Tonon has since emerged as the most prolific submission only athlete in the nogi jiu jitsu world.

As a submission specialist known for his devastating leglocks, it's easy to overlook Garry's 2015 success as an IBJJF Nogi Pan Am champion. Ok, we know what you're thinking; let's get to the good stuff...

Much has been made of both Garry and his training partner Eddie Cummings' leglock system, and for VERY good reason. Tonon has developed such a high level of competence as a leglocker that it seems only

the absolute elite (or bendy) among his competitors even stand a chance. Tonon is both the reigning Eddie Bravo Invitational Welterweight and Lightweight Champion, with the latter title claimed in phenomenal fashion: four fights, four submissions. The last year also saw Tonon venture to Europe and compete on the Polaris Pro roster twice, coming home with heel hook finishes on both occasions. These victories were made even sweeter when you look at his opponents; Bellator's Marcin Held and the iconic Japanese leglock expert, Masakazu Imanari.

With such impressive displays of dominance in the nogi submission realm so far, we'd love to see some of the middleweight 'big hitters' challenge Garry for supremacy. Tonon himself has talked about his desire to have a rematch with Kron Gracie following on from his defeat to Rickson's son at the 2013 ADCC. Though whispers of a move to MMA for both athletes could sadly throw a spanner in the works for this dream rematch, Tonon has kept us well and truly entertained over the past twelve months as a standout submission fighter.



THE UNDERDOG STORY: ORLANDO SANCHEZ

From a drug addict to Brazilian jiu jitsu black belt in four years, to ADCC Champion – now that's quite a story. For Orlando Sanchez, jiu jitsu literally saved his life.

Ok, so let's face facts, the 2015 ADCC wasn't the spectacle jiu jitsu fans would have hoped for, but as the saying goes, "don't hate the player, hate the game." Sanchez entered the tournament as a huge underdog with the

likes of Dean Lister, Vinny Magalhaes and Joao Rocha in his division.

After picking up a submission in his first match, Orlando used his wrestling skills and solid base to bully his opponents and grind out victories thanks to his dominant positional work. The judges favoured Sanchez, whose game seems ideal for the ADCC rules, all the way through to the final. It may not have been pretty and it may not have been hugely entertaining, but the story that goes behind Orlando's journey, paired with the pure elation he showed when he realised he'd been crowned champion, was one of the magic moments of 2015.

BERNARDO FARIA:

DOMINATES AT THE WORLDS

We like to see good people achieve success, so it was an absolute delight to see Bernardo Faria go home with his share of prestigious titles this past 12 months.

The last five years have been dominated by Rodolfo Vieira and Marcus Almeida, with Bernardo often having to settle for second place. Despite the trend, 2015 was Faria's time to make the headlines. Double gold at the IBJJF Pan Ams was a sure sign of the Alliance fighter's intent, as he smashed through the opposition on his way to victory. He even picked up a submission finish over Leandro Lo, a man who is truly at the top of his game.

With Rodolfo Vieira missing out on the Worlds due to injury and Marcus Almeida also suffering knee damage during the event, the stage was set for Faria to shine. Even with the omission of Vieira and Almeida, there was plenty of talent looking to challenge Faria for the biggest title in jiu jitsu, but he came through in fine fashion and picked up double gold.



RYAN HALL'S RUN:

50/50 HEAD HONCHO BRIGHTENS UP THE UFC

Seriously, is there anyone in jiu jitsu that DOESN'T love this dude? Season 22 of The Ultimate Fighter was made vastly more interesting thanks to Mr. Hall's inclusion, and you can only sit back and admire how well he did using pretty much only his jiu jitsu.

It goes without saying that Ryan had his fair share of luck in being crowned the winner of the show (namely being invited back to fight in the final) but his transitions from standing into slick leglock set ups showcased in all matches were a thing of beauty. His willingness to work from guard must also be mentioned, as there are not too many people out there pulling guard in MMA these days. Whenever Ryan pulled guard he not only looked comfortable and safe from strikes, but he looked dangerous on the attack.

Now he's signed a contract with the UFC, Ryan is set to face talent of a whole new level, but it's a challenge we're sure he'll relish facing. Whatever happens, it's been great to cheer another pure jiu jitsu athlete through to success on the global stage in MMA.



DOMINYKA OBELENYTE:

A GOLDEN START TO HER BLACK BELT CAREER

For most first year black belts, they're just looking to compete amongst the best, gain some experience and maybe, just maybe, pick up a win. Dominyka Obelenyte obviously hadn't read the script.

Kick starting her year at the European championships in Lisbon, the Lithuanian-born Marcelo Garcia student looked sharp in defeating Europe's world champion, Janni Larsson, as well as pushing Mackenzie Dern to the limits in a gruelling match. There were signs of a bright future.

Fast forward to the IBJJF Pan Ams and Dominyka claimed her first major title. Sadly, the bracket was pretty empty, but a victory over Gracie Barra's Tammy Griego was a huge boost heading into the Worlds.

When June came around, many were aware of Dominyka's abilities, but few could have predicted she would claim top spot in both the heavyweight and openweight divisions during her first year as a black belt. Though there was one notable omission from the Worlds (namely Gabi Garcia) Dominyka took on the best in the sport and came out victorious. This unexpected success was one of the highlights of the 2015 World Championships and a sign of things to come for a young athlete who is probably yet to hit her prime.



SUBMISSION OF THE YEAR, MMA:

FABRICIO WERDUM VS CAIN VELASQUEZ

It's fair to say that Fabricio Werdum is now a legend of both jiu jitsu and MMA, having fought for so many years, in so many promotions, and currently holding the UFC heavyweight belt. Going into his fight with Cain Velasquez, a seasoned wrestler and grappler in his own right, we really wouldn't have predicted a submission finish.

It's easy to forget that Werdum cut his teeth at the famous Chute Boxe academy, and he showed a willingness to throw down with Cain from the word go. After a while, it was clear to see that Werdum was winning the exchanges on the feet, and his opponent was clearly struggling. In a desperate attempt to change the way the fight was going, Cain shot in for a takedown, but he was entering the challenger's world. Werdum secured the guillotine grips, locked up his guard and picked up yet another high profile scalp via submission.

It wasn't the craziest submission you'd have seen last year, but the way Werdum set it up and executed it to perfection in the most important fight of his career makes it our favourite from 2015 in MMA.



SUBMISSION OF THE YEAR, BJJ:

DAVI RAMOS VS LUCAS LEPRI (ADCC)

Blink, and you'd have missed it, but Davi Ramos' submission victory over Lucas Lepri at the ADCC was simply breathtaking. Not only was it in the final, against a three time Nogi World Champion, but it was also one of the flashiest finishes we've seen in years.

With Lepri sat in front of Ramos, shuffling forwards towards him on the mat, it looked like both fighters were just feeling each other out before properly engaging. After attempting to grab Lepri's ankles twice, Ramos jumped through the seated guard and expertly into a tight armlock finish. If you haven't seen it yet, you'd better head over to YouTube right now. We're sure you'll agree that this was the sub of 2015 in sport jiu jitsu.



MAGIC MALFACINE:

THE MOST DECORATED ROOSTER WEIGHT IN HISTORY

Bruno Malfacine hit a huge personal landmark over the past twelve months, as he picked up his seventh IBJJF black belt world title, confirming his status as one of the greats.

It's easy to overlook such a notable achievement, as the rooster weight division is not always the deepest and, sadly, often neglected by the fans. In reality, Malfacine has put on some epic performances over the years, including many confrontations with his nemesis, Caio Terra, and more recently the Miyao Bros.

What makes Bruno's run of seven IBJJF world titles even more amazing is his consistency of performance. In fact, over the last nine years, he only missed out on first place in 2008 and 2013!

The 2015 Pan Ams also deserve a special mention, as Malfacine picked up what must have been one of his most satisfying finishes to date. With just a minute on the clock in his final match against Caio Terra, Bruno gained a leg drag, transitioned to the back and sunk in a bow-and-arrow choke. This was one of the best finishes of the year and a fantastic highlight for Malfacine to reflect on in years to come.

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GILBERT BURNS, BETTER KNOWN AS 'DURINHO' (WHICH TRANSLATES AS 'LITTLE TOUGH GUY'), IS ONE OF THE MOST AGGRESSIVE AND DYNAMIC JIU JITSU ATHLETES TO COMPETE IN THE LIGHTWEIGHT DIVISION. IF YOU WANT TO SHOW YOUNGSTERS THE PERFECT TEMPLATE FOR A GRAPPLING MATCH, JUST GOOGLE ONE OF HIS FIGHTS: TAKEDOWN, PASS GUARD, GET THE BACK AND FINISH - BEAUTY IN SIMPLICITY.





Having twice been crowned a black belt Nogi World Champion, as well as defeating Kron Gracie in the final of the 2011 Gi World Championships, Durinho has spent the last four years representing BJJ on the MMA scene. Under the guidance of the Blackzilians Team and Vitor Belfort, the UFC fighter has racked up an impressive 10-1 record, with six victories coming via submission.

In this detailed conversation, Durinho covers his rise to success in sport jiu jitsu via Team Atos, working with Vitor Belfort, his experiences in the UFC and 2015 ADCC, and setting his sights on MMA stardom.



DURINHO

Hi Durinho, can you tell our readers a little bit about your introduction to jiu jitsu?

I started training karate when I was about four or five. My dad had a big patio that he used to rent to a karate instructor, so I did that for about three years, and I'd compete a lot as well. Finally that professor moved to another state.

Me and both of my brothers actually had bronchitis, so the doctor said that having a sport to do would be good for us. We had some financial trouble back then, and my dad would fix cars at home and me and my brothers would help when we weren't at school. One day we found a gi inside one of the cars, so we started to play around with the gi and we found out that the guy who owned the car was a BJJ professor. My dad asked the guy if he didn't want to pay for fixing the car, but instead giving me and my brothers a sort of scholarship. So they made a deal, but it was only for three months, because he had to give us the gis and stuff like that as well.

So I still remember coming back from my first jiu jitsu class and my dad saying, 'did you guys like it?' He had done a sort of investment in sending us to train, because finances were tight and my mum got crazy that dad had sent us to jiu jitsu instead of taking the money. We enjoyed the jiu jitsu a lot and realised that we really needed to be the best at the gym if we wanted to keep training, because after the three months we wouldn't have money to keep paying. We hoped that if we did good the professor would extend our scholarship. Anyway, we trained really hard and after one

month we did a tournament and we all did really well. So from 12 years old as a white belt I started to compete and I've never stopped.

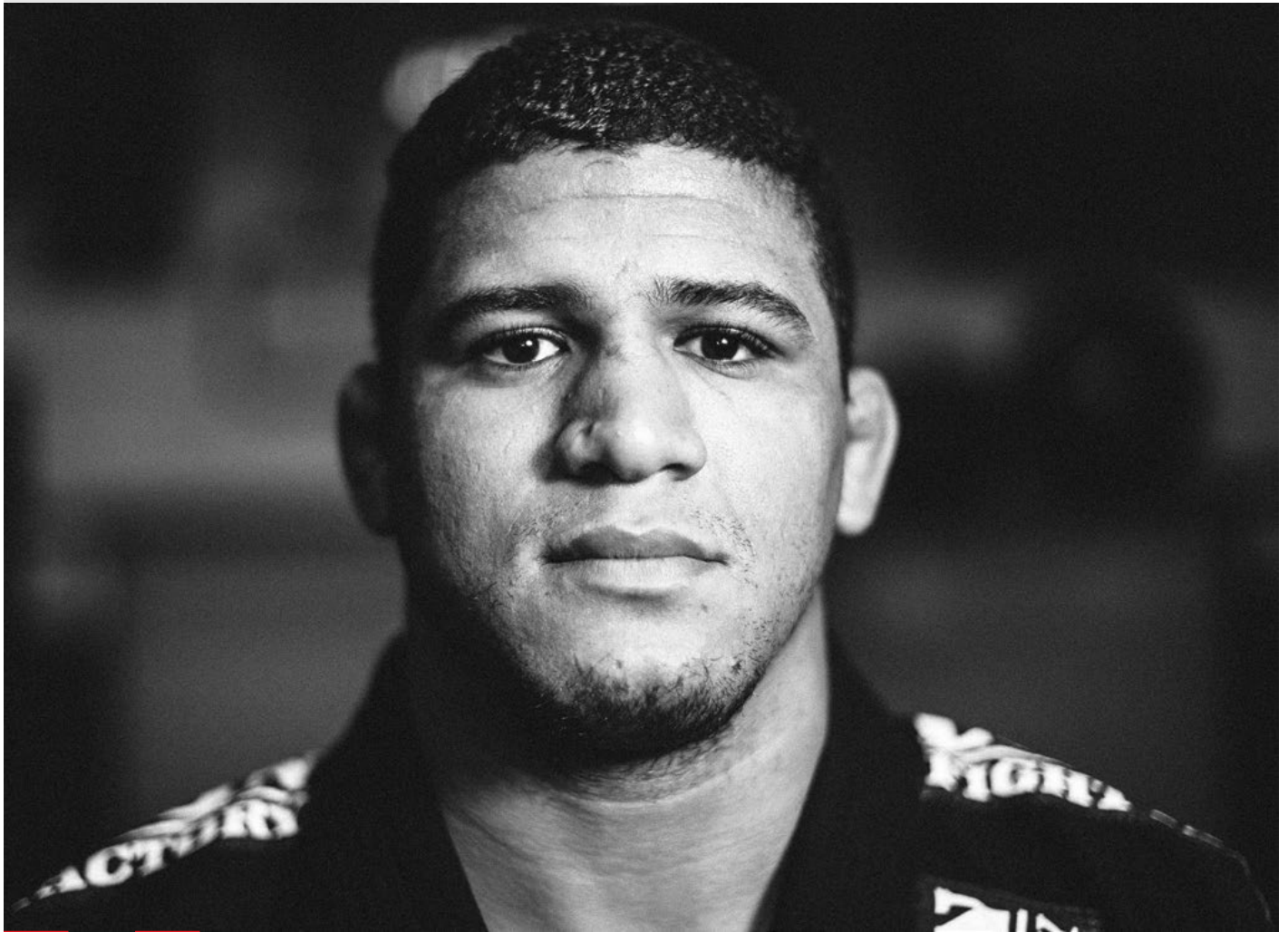
That's awesome! And of course both of your brothers are still active, with your younger brother also involved in MMA?

Yeah, so my older brother is actually in like the Brazilian Navy Seals. He's a black belt, but he travels a lot all the time. My younger brother is a black belt as well and he fights for ONE FC. He used to live in Singapore but has just moved to Miami with me.

So how did you get your nickname 'Durinho'?

It was actually because of my older brother. Durinho actually means 'little tough - little tough guy', and my brother's nickname is "Todo-Duro", which is like 'hard man'. My brother was very technical, but also really tough (laughs).

"I don't want to lose my focus of being a strong jiu jitsu fighter because I now compete in MMA. Of course I have to train wrestling and striking, which I enjoy, but I want to maintain my base of having an advantage over other UFC guys once we get to the mat."



You've gone on to achieve great success within sport jiu jitsu, so what are your personal highlights so far?

You know, my city was not very big, but guys like Ricardo Arona and Paulo Filho are also from there. My city is Niteroi. There's a lot of jiu jitsu there man, especially

for kids. In 2007 I got my black belt and moved to Sao Paulo to train with Ramon Lemos. It was Brasa at first, but then we started Atos.

In 2010 I won the Abu Dhabi World Pro, the Nogi Worlds and the Brazilian National Championships. Then in 2011 I won the big one, the gi World Championships, so those are probably my highlights so far.

And of course you beat Kron Gracie in the 2011 final, so that must have felt very special?

Three weeks before the Worlds in 2011, I went to Switzerland to teach a seminar at one of my friend's academies. But the main reason I went to Europe was to fight at a tournament in Italy where the winner took like €4,000. When I got to the tournament, Kron was there, and I fought him in the final. I took him down, almost passed his guard a couple of times and got advantages. I think I then underestimated him a little bit and felt like it was going to be easy. As soon as I felt like that, he tapped me out. I went back to Brazil with no money and I heard he was going to be competing as a lightweight at the Worlds, so I thought I could have my chance for a rematch.

People don't realise that when it came to that final in 2011, there was the pressure of the whole crowd singing for Kron, with Rickson Gracie sat right there as well. It made things very special for me. I also beat Lucas Lepri that day too.

So quite quickly after your success in 2011 you moved into MMA – was that always the plan?

I always had a dream of being a world champion, but once I conquered that dream I started to think of other things. I'm from a Nova Uniao affiliation originally, so I had trained a little bit of MMA before and had that exposure. I actually moved to Sao Paulo because I had a dream to be a world champion, but Nova Uniao mentality is more MMA. My goal is now MMA, so I changed my environment again to help with that.

Even though you now fight for the UFC, you still seem to enjoy competing in jiu jitsu when you can?

I'm a jiu jitsu fighter, and I believe that even though my goal is now MMA, I need to compete in jiu jitsu when I can to help keep me sharp and at a high level. Of course, when I enter a jiu jitsu tournament I want to win, but my goal is not to be winning jiu jitsu tournaments, it's to keep my grappling sharp for MMA.

I don't want to lose my focus of being a strong jiu jitsu fighter because I now compete in MMA. Of course I have to train wrestling and striking, which I enjoy, but I want to maintain my base of having an advantage over other UFC guys once we get to the mat.

It is a very hard balance to maintain man, let me tell you. I want to improve my stand up and MMA skills, but maintain my high level jiu jitsu, so whenever I am not fighting MMA I try to do some grappling tournaments if I can.

The jiu jitsu community love to see their

top-level champions winning matches in organisations such as the UFC. Is that something you feel proud of yourself? Representing the jiu jitsu community?

I love to represent. Not just my city, not just my country, but also the whole jiu jitsu community. This year I had an injury with my rib, so I went to the Worlds just to watch and I had a lot of guys coming up and saying 'I love watching you fight', so that's an honour for me.

So how did your relationship with Vitor Belfort start, as he's always in your corner and you train with him regularly now?

It started right after I beat Kron in 2011. We had the same sponsor at the time and I went to the

**"I BEAT KRON
GRACIE ON SUNDAY,
MET VITOR BELFORT
ON WEDNESDAY
AND NEXT MONDAY
I HAD MOVED
TO VEGAS FOR
TRAINING"**

store at the Worlds and Vitor was there. I was looking to transition into MMA, and Vitor asked if I wanted to roll jiu jitsu a little bit. So we ended up training. He is very smart and was asking me questions about my game as we were rolling. It felt like it had been 10 minutes but we'd be training for almost two hours.

Vitor then asked me if I wanted to fight MMA and that he was also looking for a guy to help him with his jiu jitsu. The deal was good for me to learn MMA from his team, and the deal was good for him too, so we closed the deal. Actually, I moved straight to Vegas after the Worlds. I beat Kron on Sunday, met Vitor on Wednesday and next Monday I had moved to Vegas for training.

We have a very close relationship; he just texted me asking if my London trip is good, actually (laughs). He has a lot of experience and I have learned so much from him. I also think I've learned so much from being in his corner too. Being able to take in the atmosphere of a big fight, to look at how he handles the adrenalin, how to cut weight – everything. Once I came to the UFC, I felt like I already had experience of competing there.

What do you enjoy to compete in more, jiu jitsu or MMA?

I like them both, but I prefer MMA. I'm the kind of guy that doesn't like to be too friendly with my opponents. I saw Buchecha and Rodolfo (Vieira) kind of friendly before their matches, but that doesn't work for me. I'm probably more like Rafa Mendes and Cobrinha. We show respect, but not friendly. I feel more the MMA approach, the face off at the weigh-in, that's more me.

I think now the thing with MMA is that I am really enjoying the training, because I'm always learning so much. I enjoy learning the striking and wrestling and there's so much more for me to do, so that also adds to why I like to fight MMA so much right now.

Let's talk a little bit about your experiences at the 2015 ADCC, as you came third and also claimed a big scalp in beating Otavio Sousa.

I wasn't too happy with the result in the end when I look at my fight with Davi Ramos. We were very friendly before, very close, and like I said before, that doesn't suit me. I brought Davi to train with Atos, actually. We always trained hard together, really tough. I don't think it's right to comment too much on training, but I always felt I trained good with Davi. When it came to the fight with Davi at the ADCC I was very confident, and then I lost, so I'm still annoyed because I know I could have won. I know I made a few technical mistakes, but I also had that feeling of fighting a friend, so I went in to the match too relaxed compared to how I normally approach things. It was a good lesson.

I trained one month with Calasans for the ADCC, he stayed with me in America and so it was really nice to get back to pure jiu jitsu for a while. It was my first ADCC, and the atmosphere in the stadium was great. The organisers have already told me they like the way I fight and have invited me to the next event. I know I beat some good guys, like Otavio Sousa, but I still feel a little upset I couldn't win. It's fine though - I accept this, as my main goal is to be the UFC champion.

You've just experienced your first loss in MMA, so how do you feel now reflecting on that?

I knew it would be a very tough fight when I signed the contract and I sacrificed so much for this. I am annoyed because I trained right, worked hard on my diet and I just couldn't perform to my best. I had lots of confidence going into the fight, and I was very upset when I lost, but I learned so much as well. I know I got too emotional.

Against Davi at the ADCC I came into the fight

too friendly, then in my last MMA fight I came in too aggressive. I am still in the process of learning how to best manage my emotions. Sometimes I think you need to be a little cold and don't show how you're feeling – I want to work on that. Even after fights, I want to manage my emotions better.

Do you think managing emotions is something that fighters overlook?

Well, I think for the show and for the fans, people want to see emotion, you know? But maybe to hit the next level and to be a champion it's something that you have to really have under control.

That said, I don't want to change my actual style. I still want to be aggressive and push the pace in fights. If we are striking, I want to knock you out; if we are grappling, I want the submission or ground and pound. I don't think there's a correct answer and I guess everyone is different, but for me I want to manage emotion better without taking away from my mentality as a fighter.

Well said! Thanks for your time Durinho, is there anything else you wanted to say to the Jiu Jitsu Style readers?

I'd just like to thank everyone for their support. Through all my wins or losses, I am proud to represent the jiu jitsu community and I carry that family with me whenever I fight.

**"I WANT TO WIN,
BUT MY GOAL
IS NOT TO BE
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IT'S TO KEEP MY
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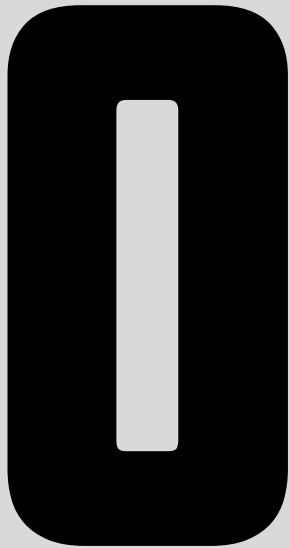


JIU JITSU SAVED MY LIFE

ORLANDO SANCHEZ



WORDS: FELIX RODRIGUEZ
PICTURES: STEFAN KOCEV



Orlando Sanchez is a man of many hats. He is a family man, an athlete, a Brazilian jiu jitsu black belt, a business owner, an instructor, an ADCC champion, but most important of all, he is an addict. The man known as 'The Cuban Tree Stump' lives and breathes because of jiu jitsu; it literally saved his life, and gave him an outlet in which to pour his obsessive and addictive personality. Jiu Jitsu Style met with Orlando to discuss his rise to black belt in an astonishing four years, and how he rose from being a cocaine addict on the brink of death to ADCC champion. This is his story.

LIFE BEFORE JIU JITSU

Orlando has been a competitive athlete his entire life. Prior to being a martial artist his focus was American football. He played this sport from childhood all the way to early adulthood with the hopes of becoming a professional player in the National Football League. As a football player his life was extremely regimented and planned to the point where he barely had to think for himself. He just followed schedules, went to practices and showed up on game day.

While he was good enough to earn an athletic scholarship for college he never made it into the NFL. In a sense this led Orlando to lose his identity, and himself to an extent. Football not only provided him with a structure and tangible goals to work towards, but also gave him a steady supply of adrenaline that was fed through daily competition. When his football career was over his life was devoid of purpose, and without having a source to constantly feed his need for adrenaline, depression and substance abuse were a natural progression.

HITTING BOTTOM

Addiction is a disease and here is no magical remedy to cure a human being from addiction. Addicts can stop using, but they will remain addicts even if they are living a clean and drug-free lifestyle. For this to happen they must rely on a strong support group, have the necessary willpower to stop using and experience what is known as a "bottom." When an addict hits their bottom, or lowest point, it usually serves as a wake-up call for them to either change their ways or face death. Orlando had to hit his bottom to figure out that if he didn't stop using soon he was about to meet his maker.

In his own words: "I graduated college in my early twenties. I finished playing football and I didn't make it to the NFL, so now here I am in my early twenties, I'm done and I had nothing to do. I played football for more than half of my life and now it was all gone - taken away from me. I wasn't ready to be a normal person in society. It goes further back, from getting deep into my childhood, there was dysfunction for me growing

up, all these types of things, it was a perfect storm for when that time came where I had no more responsibilities, I was completely on my own, that's when all hell broke loose, man. I stayed high for like five or six years every single day.

"It was all a haze, from 21 to 26 years old I don't remember anything, and now that my brain is getting more adjusted and more sober I'll have days that I'll have flashbacks from those times and it's really bizarre. I'm lucky to be here. Nobody has ever been able to abuse their bodies like I did. I was 26 years-old, I was 365 lb., I was doing almost an ounce of cocaine a day, I was drinking heavily every night to try to fall asleep. I was basically a dead man walking.

"I remember lying in bed one night, I was looking at this mirror in my room and I was smoking a cigarette on my bed. I don't even smoke cigarettes, I was staring at myself, and I had this pain in my chest, it felt like just a thousand pounds just laying on my chest. I couldn't breathe, I couldn't move and I literally just kind of gave up. I pretty much accepted that I was going to die; I thought I was dying, and I told myself, if I f***ing make it to tomorrow I'm going to try to change my life."

FROM FOOTBALL TO JIU JITSU

Orlando has an addictive personality; he cannot do anything at half speed. When he finds something he loves he pours his heart and soul into it, giving every ounce of his being to that endeavour. This was the case with football first and later Brazilian jiu jitsu. Although he never reached the heights he sought when pursuing his first love, his obsessive nature and long years of playing football helped lay the foundation for his future success in martial arts.

He told us: "I think playing American football is one of the hardest sports in the world, not just physically for what it does to your body, but the mental aspect of how long the season is, what the season asks of you. Anyone who has played American football at the college level understands it. I mean you go months and months at a time, your whole entire day is consumed by football. It basically tells you when to wake up, when to sleep, what to eat, what not to eat, it dictates your entire life. Football dictated my life for so many years and it just gave me that kind of discipline, that sense of camaraderie to be part of a team; it just did so much for me mentally to endure long training sessions, to endure months of training camps, to endure all these things.

"People don't realise that in football you do practices of three to five hours every day where you're constantly hitting each other, smashing each other with helmets. It's a brutal sport, so all these things helped me in preparation to excel in combat sports. Once I started training in jiu jitsu it was easy - I wasn't getting hit all the time, I didn't get helmets in my chest, I didn't get smashed in the face, concussions on a daily basis, so football really prepared me physically and mentally to love combat sports, especially jiu jitsu."

After Orlando hit his bottom as an addict he decided to try and get better. He was morbidly obese, grossly out of shape and severely addicted to cocaine. His first effort towards recovery was going back to what he'd known his entire life; he

went to the gym and started working out again. The morning after hitting bottom he went back to the gym, and while lifting weights he had a chance encounter that was the catalyst to change his life around.

"I started talking to this guy called Ricky Delgado that I knew did Muay Thai and kickboxing and I spoke to him. I told him 'man I need help, I need to start working out again, and I need to do something. I've been an athlete my whole life.' He told me to come with him to his kickboxing gym Sityodtong in Pasadena, California. He took me over there, I was 26 years old and I started doing striking. I was so big that they didn't have clothes for me to wear, I had to cut up sweat pants to train. I started Muay Thai with Walter at Sityodtong, I'm still friends with him to this day. I started doing it and I really liked it, it was fun.

"I started working out again, I tried to cut back on my drugs and then this one guy comes in one day who was a jiu jitsu guy. He was a little guy, he was like, 'oh yeah let's grapple' and I was like, 'what the f*** does that mean, what is jiu jitsu? I don't know what that s*** is.' So we started rolling and he kicked my ass, man. He wasn't even half my size and he just destroyed me, he f***** me up, choked me out, popped my elbows, and right then and there I decided, 'man I need to learn this s***, what is this?!' That was it, I started training that day in jiu jitsu, obsessing about jiu jitsu and after that it became jiu jitsu 24 hours a day, every single day," said Sanchez.

FAIXA PRETA IN FOUR YEARS

The chemical imbalances that make Orlando an addict are both a blessing and curse for him. They are a curse because he is his own worst enemy and he cannot control himself when partaking in alcohol or drugs. They are also a blessing, because when he turned his obsessive nature towards a positive outlet, he was able to hyper focus and turn all of his energy into becoming the best jiu jitsu practitioner he could be in an astonishingly short period of time. Orlando began training with Romulo Barral at an Alberto Crane academy and received his black belt in four years from Ze Radiola and Barral.

It usually takes a person 10 years to earn the rank of black belt. To put Orlando's achievement

into perspective, that is 60% quicker than it takes the average person to earn one. When asked how he did it, he points towards his brain chemistry. "It happened so fast, I didn't even know what happened really. I was always competitive in nature, for me once I started, my whole brain was about winning tournaments. I didn't give a f*** about

"I WAS DOING ALMOST AN OUNCE OF COCAINE A DAY, I WAS DRINKING HEAVILY EVERY NIGHT TO TRY TO FALL ASLEEP. I WAS BASICALLY A DEAD MAN WALKING"

anything else except winning tournaments. That was all I wanted to do. So all I started to do was sign up for any tournament available.

"I was super broke, I had just met my now wife who at the time was my girlfriend. She was in graduate school finishing her degree in forensic anthropology and she had student loan money. I would take some of that money and I would sign up for tournaments so I could compete and travel for the first couple of years that I did jiu jitsu, just trying to rack up as many gold medals as I could. I was obsessed. The guy who I was with during this time was Romulo Barral; by the

luck of the draw he had just moved here from Brazil and was coming back from an injury. I had just met him and I didn't even know who he was, but we became super close and I got to train with him every single day, twice sometimes three times a day. That's how I got so good so fast. Romulo was basically my private training partner for two and a half years, it was just me and him kicking each other's ass."

Sanchez and Barral became like brothers and eventually stopped seeing eye-to-eye with Crane. After cutting ties with Crane they eventually linked up with Ze Radiola when Orlando was a purple belt. When describing meeting his future master Orlando noted, "I met Ze Radiola at the end of my purple belt campaign when he came down here for a Pan Ams training camp. Me and Romulo were training with him and we instantly clicked. He was like that old man Grand Master; I just had so much respect for him, so much admiration, we just connected and I started training with him regularly.

"He would come down here for about a month at a time and then I would go down to Brazil to train with him, and I'd stay at his house. That relationship evolved and became almost like a father-son relationship, he's just been such an amazing human being to me. I have such an enormous amount of respect for him. Once he put me under his wing I won everything. I went down to Brazil and became the only American to ever win the Brazilian Nationals double gold as a brown belt; I won Pans as a brown belt. Meeting Ze Radiola was really a turning point in my life."

FROM ADDICT TO ADCC CHAMPION

Orlando has been on a competition rampage since he began training in jiu jitsu. His sole focus has been to seek and destroy, win at all costs and win everything. His list of accomplishments would be impressive even if he'd been training for 20 years, but when we consider the fact that he's been training for only eight years and he's already achieved what he has, everything is that much more mind boggling. After having a bad showing at ADCC 2013 he figured out a blueprint for success and put aside his MMA career to solely focus on preparing to win ADCC 2015.

As an addict, he lives one day at a time, and is still vulnerable and prone to relapsing, which was part of the reason why he did not meet his own expectations at ADCC 2013. "I was not mentally there for the 2013 ADCC. I was super out of shape; I was dealing with some relapse issues in my own sobriety. I was having some issues with my mental game, had a lot of personal issues in my life and was just not in a good place. Even though I was going through all

that I still went out there and quickly figured out how to win; I understood the scoring, the points and all that. I fought Cyborg Abreu for 20 minutes and it was 0-0 and they gave him the advantage for the win. I took the loss and right after I went on record saying 'watch in 2015, I'm coming back and I'm going to beat everybody,' said Sanchez.

Orlando got his act together once again, and focused on the task-in hand. He prepared meticulously for the 2015 tournament; mentally, physically, and strategically. He noted, "I came



back home and trained specifically for ADCC. I trained my cardio in a certain way, I tailored my game plan and executed it to a T, so I knew exactly what to do with each opponent. At ADCC 2015 they gave me the hardest bracket, but I came prepared, I capitalised and still was able to win it all. There were some pretty big names in my bracket, but I thought Jared Dopp would be the biggest challenge.

"Two weeks before the ADCC I was sitting with Romulo Barral, we were training and I told him and everyone there that Dopp would be the hardest guy. They all disagreed, but I knew this because I already knew how the other guys played. I'm very cerebral when it comes to jiu jitsu. I'm very mental; to me it's not about aggression, it's not about size, it's about brains.

I knew that Jared Dopp had the best game plan to win under these sets of rules. I knew he'd be the biggest challenge to win it all and sure enough he made it to the finals.

"We fought, and it was perfect, I played my strategy perfectly and cruised to the victory. I knew that Dopp would be the hardest and it was true; it wasn't my most difficult match, it just took the longest because I didn't want to give any advantages

or points. I took him down twice, passed his guard, suplexed him three times in the first 10 minutes, but didn't score any points because of the rule set. After I did all of that stuff I knew in my mind the refs would give me the advantage, so I had to be smart and play my game to a T in order to win."

Sanchez believes his preparation for each specific scenario was instrumental in his taking home the title, and also believes his old football habit of game planning by watching copious

amounts of film on opponents gave him an extra edge during the tournament.

"People don't realise when they're watching football that it's all about game planning. Game planning is huge, you have no idea how much time I spent watching film during college football. When people go and claim that they go to win and go for the finish, to that I say 'bull****'. Everyone wants to win, and if you don't want to win you're doing this for the wrong reasons. You're an idiot.' You're stupid if you're telling me you don't want to win. For me, I'm going to find out what is the best way to win and I'm going to beat you every time. It's like Fabricio Werdum always tells me. Nobody remembers how you win, they just remember who won.

"For ADCC, I knew if I fought Dean Lister all I had to do was put my pressure and score points on him and not let him get underneath me. He was scared, he didn't know what to do. I was much bigger than him, much faster, and as soon as he felt my weight he just crumbled because he didn't know what to do. Everybody is afraid of his leglocks, but I was like, dude, there is no way I'm going to let him get to my feet. I played on my knees, I put my pressure on and I smashed him. Vinny Magalhaes, he does his very flexible game so all I had to do was play safe and smart on my knees and every time he went for a submission, tuck myself in. Then he went to turtle position and stayed there for 80% of the fight, and then he cried like a little b**** after I won, but it's not my fault if he stays in turtle for 18 minutes of the fight," said Sanchez. This is what Orlando had prepared for. He comes into each tournament with a general game plan that gets tweaked for each style he faces.

Sanchez explained: "My game plan is to shut you down and impose my will. So if you come to my gym and we train jiu jitsu it's going to be a completely different experience than it is to fight me in competition because in competitions I'm fighting you to win. That's it. The only thing I care about in a tournament is to win, and anyone else who tells you differently is just lying to themselves and trying to be cool. If you're competing you want to win. If we're in the gym I'm going to play, I'm going to do berimbolos, all kinds of fun s***, but in a tournament I'm going to win doing whatever it takes."

THE NEXT BIG NAME IN MMA

Orlando's jiu jitsu career has been meteoric to



say the least. Even more impressive is that he's been training in MMA for six of the eight years he's been involved in combat sports. On the mats he represents Gracie Barra's Red Shield with immense pride, and when he steps into the cage he represents Kings MMA. He is currently undefeated in mixed martial arts competition with a record of 5-0 with one no-contest, and in pure Orlando fashion, he is going all-in with his sights set on joining Fabricio Werdum – his main training partner – in the UFC by 2016.

He noted: "I was always interested in doing MMA. A couple of years into training jiu jitsu, as a purple belt, I went down to Kings MMA one day. There was a sparring session, this was before Kings MMA was even open. It was just Werdum and Rafael Cordeiro and them training there. Cordeiro came over to me and said 'Oh Orlando, you're a big guy, why don't you spar with Werdum, and Werdum kicked me in the face so hard, dude, I went down on one knee; I was like knocked out on my feet. I came back up and just attacked him like I wanted to kill him."

"Ever since that day we've just become best of friends. Kings MMA, Rafael Cordeiro and Fabricio Werdum are my family, man. They're a huge part of my life, I've been with them for six years. So six out of the eight years I've been into combat sports I've been training with them, training alongside Werdum step-by-step as he left

Strikeforce and worked his way to UFC champion."

The partnership with Werdum has been extremely beneficial to Orlando as a blossoming mixed martial artist. They have a fraternal relationship based on mutual admiration, insane competitive drive and a twist of sadism. When describing how Werdum has helped Sanchez develop his MMA skillset he explained: "Werdum has helped more than anything in my mental aspect of the game. He's given me a confidence that no one else in the world can give me. When you're constantly, day-in and day-out competing against someone who does not want to lose as much as you don't want to lose it becomes like a world championship fight every single day. That's why I've been able to go and fight guys like Leandro Lo, Andre Galvao and Gregor Gracie and all these other big names that I've beat; it's because I don't look to them as big names. To me the biggest name in the world is Fabricio Werdum. Undeniably, the best BJJ, MMA guy so to me going up against anyone else is no big deal.

"That's what he's helped me on. He's helped me with my confidence, on my mindset, and also on my striking. My ability to fight, to be knocked out on my feet and keep going. Every day that we fight, it's a war. We keep tallies to see who beats each other on the ground, who taps the other more – I'm winning by the way (laughs). We love each other, he is absolutely like my own brother, he is like my own blood.

"I have so much love and admiration for Fabricio Werdum, and Rafael Cordeiro who is like a father to me. I cannot speak highly enough about my relationship with Werdum and Rafael. I'm so excited to give back and make it into the UFC in 2016 and represent them as well as myself and my team. Fighting in January in Costa Rica, gonna be the main event in CRF in Costa Rica; I'll be 6-0, undefeated, ADCC champion, Werdum's main training partner. If you don't put me in the UFC then I don't know what else I need to do."

When Sanchez finally makes it to the UFC he will undoubtedly face some large competition, both literally and figuratively. Although he competes in the heaviest divisions for both BJJ and MMA he is somewhere between 5'9 and 5'10, roughly the same height as Daniel Cormier. According to Sanchez his relatively small stature poses a huge advantage in fighting.

"It's a total advantage because I'm so short, and my little limbs are so short and so strong that guys cannot understand how to play against me in MMA or BJJ; I'm just really hard to deal with. My jiu jitsu now is at a very high level, I understand berimbolos, I understand leg drags and all the high level stuff and I can play like a little guy, but I'm 5'9, 279 lb, and I'm super quick, strong and explosive. This combination causes a lot of frustration when guys go against

me. It causes so much frustration that they have to go and talk s*** about me after I beat them."

At 5'9" Sanchez is almost guaranteed to give up height advantage when competing, but he does not see this as a problem. He believes his competitiveness, athletic ability and penchant for solid strategy are enough to help him overcome any adversary. "The beauty is I'm short, but I have a pretty long reach at 73 inches, which people don't realise; that's pretty long for somebody of my height. It's actually longer than Mike Tyson. When being short, you have to remember that when fighting in a cage there is nowhere to run. If I back someone against the cage all that length and all that reach goes out the window. If you watch heavyweights fighting in the UFC, 99% of the time they're going to end up in a clinch up against the cage. Once that happens, the advantage is 95% of the time in my favour. Another thing is that I fight on a daily basis with the best guy in the UFC, obviously, in Fabricio Werdum, who is 6'6" and has an extraordinary reach. Believe me, I know what to do," said Sanchez.

ENJOYING RECOVERY

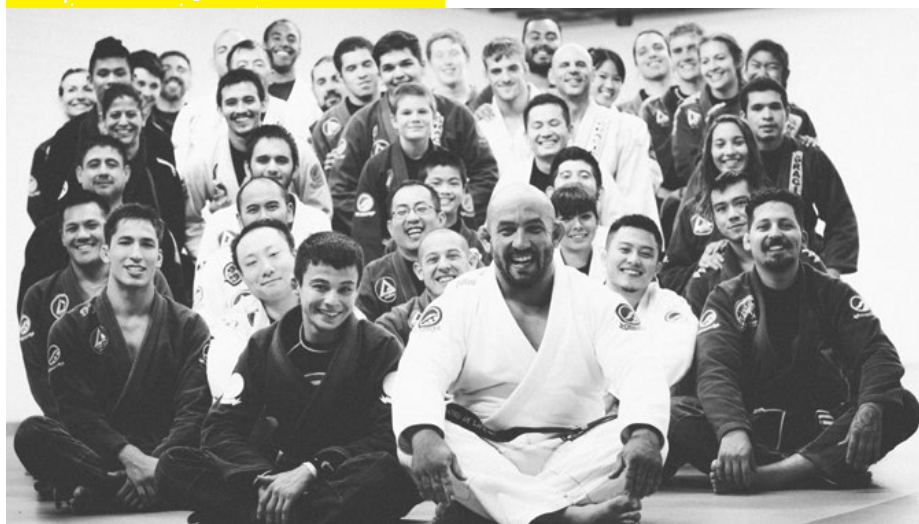
Orlando has beat the odds by staying alive and turning his life around. He believes he owes everything to the Gentle Art and is not shy about admitting it. He noted: "There's nothing in my life outside of BJJ, man. My whole life has become intertwined with jiu jitsu. Every single thing I do every day has some kind of reflection back to Brazilian jiu jitsu. The food I eat, the water I drink, the clothes I put on my back, everything is because of jiu jitsu so all I try to do in my day-to-day life is give back to jiu jitsu as much as I can. My day-to-day life, I mean obviously, I'm fighting MMA, I'm trying to make it to the UFC, and I will be in the UFC in 2016, but even then, when I'm training MMA everything comes back to Brazilian jiu jitsu. To me, jiu jitsu is my entire life. I'm married, been married to my wife for eight years, I have two beautiful children, and life is beautiful. I owe everything I have to jiu jitsu."

As an addict, Orlando knows all too well the lows a person can suffer, and he wants people going through the same struggles he did to know that he is here to help them. He had the following message for anyone reading this article who feels hopeless, and is thinking about quitting substance abuse:

"First of all, you can't make anyone do anything they don't want to do. That's what I first realised when going through recovery, but to me the biggest thing is to tell people that you're not alone. If more men, and women of course, but I speak to a lot of men because they aren't allowed to be emotional or vulnerable in today's society because the first time you express emotions you're called a p**** or a b**** or you're labelled weak. I think this is a huge problem for men.

"A lot of guys I see struggling with addiction, my first thing is to tell them, 'man, you're not alone.' You need to get yourself involved with people that are going through the same s*** that you're going through, people who understand on a day-to-day basis what it's like to be an addict, what it's like to tell yourself not to do it, but you still go ahead and do it. Unless you're around a group of people who understand this you'll never understand it. It's important to talk about it, to find some kind of group with similar individuals and talk through it and help you in that way.

"Be open and talk about stuff, don't be alone. The more you stay alone the worse it will become and manifest into further substance abuse. Never keep it in, always find someone to talk to, we're out there. And if anyone reads this and does jiu jitsu and knows who I am, they can find me on social media, they can write to me and talk to me. I get messages every day from martial artists that are struggling with addiction. All the time, from black belts to white belts and everything in between, I'm here to help."



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WORDS: OLIVER GEDDES



STRUCTURING A CLASS - THE HOWS AND WHYS

Every instructor has their own individual way of running classes at **their academy**.

Some prefer drilling, some prefer as much hard sparring as possible. What I aim to do in this article is outline a little of how I like to run a typical class, and why I choose to run it in the way that I do.

TIMELINE FOR A 90 MINUTE CLASS

Warm-up and mobilisation - 15 minutes

First rolling period - 10 minutes

Technique - 25 minutes

Technique sparring - 10 minutes

Sparring - 30 minutes

WARM-UP AND MOBILISATION

No one likes lining up and doing jumping jacks and squats. No one. Although having a familiar and non-taxing warm-up every session does have its advantages (and in warmer climates, may be more than sufficient to get somebody prepared for a class), in general I prefer a very mobile warm up. I line everyone up on the wall, and then send them off to run around the edges of the mats, clapping hands with every member of the class individually as they pass, to welcome them to the class. The movements here are fairly typical - shoulder rotations, high knees and heels, sideways skipping, sprints, forward rolls, backward rolls and shrimping. These allows students to warm up their joints whilst raising their core body temperature and getting their heart rate up.

Finally, mobilisation concludes with some movement drilling. My favourite sequence for this is passing the open guard (usually with a bullfight variation, but any open guard pass is fine) to knee on belly. Your partner turns in and you step over the head and switch to the other side, blocking their hips with your elbow to turn

into side control. If you want to, you can increase the difficulty by adding a back take or Ezekiel choke on at the end for the more advanced students.

This is usually drilled for a minute and a half per person. The reason I like this movement in particular is because it's one of the movements in jiu jitsu that you just have to have on tap - you can't really set it up, and if you have to think about it, the moment is gone. As it's all movement based with no real partner resistance, there's a much lower risk of anyone who might have arrived late hurting themselves. Other good alternatives are open guard passing movements and chains or guard retention drills.

THE FIRST ROLLING PERIOD

A lot of people come into class looking to spar, and the longer you make them wait the more antsy they get, so their attention can end up wandering. By introducing sparring early you can burn off some of their excess energy and get them calmed down and ready to listen when the technique begins afterwards. It gives people who are less fit two sparring sections in the class with more recovery time in between, so newer students don't have to sit out as much.

The basic structure is 'King of the Hill' guard passing, with preferably just under half the class on their backs and the other half waiting on the wall. If it's possible to do it so there's just one person spare, so much the better. This sets a very fast pace; it stops people from getting cold in between rolls and it makes students less likely to be stubborn about losing. When there's a 20-person line along the wall, people fight much harder to avoid having to go back to the line and this can slightly increase the likelihood of injury.

Finally, it is incredibly frustrating to watch people spar for five minutes, go in, get swept in ten seconds and then head back to the wall to watch again. I also introduce a few other elements to keep everyone tested and working throughout to the best of their ability: the person who is playing guard can only close their guard for three seconds at a time - this prevents things from getting too bogged down with someone just staying stuck in closed guard for five minutes at a time. It makes things happen, and ultimately the more you get done in a roll the more you learn, whether it succeeds or not. Related to the above point, I ban the lockdown from half guard. Great technique, but it makes it too easy to slow the action down. No leglocks of any kind - this is primarily because most people's feet and knees may not be entirely warmed up yet, but it also encourages people to make clean sweeps and passes without having to second guess the threat of leglocks.

It's a little unfair not to allow people to close their guards whilst exposing them to footlocks. If you win, you stay in - this means that the more experienced students will train for longer rounds, dealing with





Oli Geddes
is a seasoned
competitor,
referee,
globetrotter,
half guard
connoisseur and
black belt under
Roger Gracie

fresh opponents and testing and improving their stamina and fitness that way. Newer students will get the chance to work with a lot of different people and experience a lot of different rolling styles over the same time period. The person who comes off the wall gets to choose top or bottom - by allowing the person coming in to choose to be positioned

“A LOT OF PEOPLE COME INTO CLASS LOOKING TO SPAR, AND THE LONGER YOU MAKE THEM WAIT THE MORE ANTSY THEY GET, SO THEIR ATTENTION CAN END UP WANDERING”

wherever their game is stronger, it makes it harder for the person in the middle to stay in the middle. Additionally, it prevents guard players from staying in forever whilst only utilising the more developed part of their game.

TECHNIQUE

This is simple and traditional. I show two or three related movements from a position, trying to cover the most common possible reactions to the situation. Obviously it is important to choose the correct techniques in building a structured syllabus for your students, but that's beyond the scope of this article.

TECHNIQUE SPARRING

Once again, this is a 10-minute round of King of the Hill, this time from the position of the day. I prefer King of the Hill for this because it gives you the opportunity to try the technique when faced

with many different body types and many different reactions. One person is generally going to react one way so just drilling with one partner can be limiting. This method allows you to work the technique on someone of different levels, so you can try it on people you are better than as well as those who are better than you.

The two primary rules this time: everyone should hit the position of the day once - if this means you stack the deck in their favour or that you have to give them the final power grips out of the gate, that's what you have to do. The important thing here is that for someone to retain a technique and work it into their game they need to both have it cemented into their memory and to have confidence in it. Using it in sparring achieves both aims. If the technique has multiple stages or the class is longer in duration, it is possible to devote time to several different sparring setups with the attacker getting less and less controlling grips each time.

If you win three times, you are out - this stops students who are either overall more experienced or who are particularly skilled with the technique of the day from just camping out and taking up all the relevant mat time. By cycling through these people who keep winning, you give the newer or less familiar students more time and opportunity to successfully hit the move of the day.

SPARRING

To finish the class, we move on to regular sparring. I usually favour six minute rounds but if time is limited I will decrease the length of the rounds rather than the number of them. I believe that in general there is more to be learned from diversity of training partners than extra time with one individual. I will often begin the sparring from the position of the day to give further opportunity to hit some of the techniques live. Pairs start in that position and then spar normally, changing positions as appropriate. Should someone be submitted, they will switch top and bottom and start again. If I feel that there hasn't been appropriate specific training this is an opportunity to get a little more in whilst not stifling the students' games too much.

Overall, this structure means that students will get 45 to 50 minutes of live training in a 90 minute class, which is a lot, whilst steering them down a path that allows them to expand and utilise the techniques of the day. There's nothing worse than being taught a new technique and then spending all the sparring rounds of the day in a completely different position with no possibility of employing the technique you've just learned. I hope you can work some of these concepts into how you run your classes and that it brings the benefits I have seen when using it with my own students. ■



Nick Brooks (Black Elite)

IBJJF European Champion 2013
MAGA European Champion 2012

Dickie Martin (Black Leve)

Masters World Champion 2014
Heavyweight and Openweight

Sam Gibson (Blue Leve)

English Champion 2013 & 2014
British Champion 2013 & 2014
European No-Gi Champion 2013

Lee Renault (Superlight)

English Champion 2012/2013/2014
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WORDS: BUDO JAKE
PICTURES: BUDO DAVE

13 TIPS TO CONSIDER WHEN VISITING ANOTHER GYM

In my ten plus years of training BJJ, I've travelled to probably over 100 different gyms both in the **US** and **internationally**.

If you watched my show "Rolled Up" on YouTube, then you too have seen some of these gyms.

Some of them are very familiar to me. Braulio Estima's gym in England for example, felt much like my home gym (Gracie Barra HQ in Irvine). Other schools have a totally different vibe – such as Kurt Osiander's, Erik Paulson's, or Gokor's gym.

What I have found is that all gyms have their own unique atmosphere. If you only visit gyms similar to your own you might not have much of a "culture shock" but you will also be missing out on some great learning opportunities!

They say learning takes place outside of your comfort zone and I for sure picked up many valuable lessons when I trained at places very different than what I am used to. I'm talking about going beyond even BJJ; to judo gyms, catch wrestling gyms, and MMA schools. There's so much to learn out there!

That being said, I want to help you with your journey. No one likes making faux pas, or to put it more plainly, no one wants to make an ass out of themselves.

So here, in no particular order, is my list of top things you should or shouldn't do when visiting a new gym:

1) CONTACT THE GYM AHEAD OF TIME.

Let's face it, no matter how often people throw around the phrase "leave your ego at the door",

there's still a lot of ego in many grappling gyms. If you show up unannounced, you're likely to be viewed as a challenger and will be soundly paired up with the toughest guys in class. Not always, but it does happen. A simple phone call or email telling them who you are and why you want to visit will make you much more welcome. Tell them a bit about who you train with and your rank as well.

2) ASK YOUR INSTRUCTOR IF THERE ARE ANY ISSUES.

Some old-school instructors do not like their students visiting other gyms. Personally, I will not tolerate this attitude, but you still might want to run it by your teacher to avoid an unpleasant situation.

3) ASK ABOUT THEIR GI POLICY.

For some academies, anything goes. Blue jacket, white pants? No problem. For other schools, it's white gis only. I remember walking into Saulo Ribeiro's academy with a grey gi, to hear him say, 'that's the ugliest gi I've ever seen!' When in doubt, a white gi is always safe.

4) IF IT'S A NOGI CLASS, WEAR SPATS.

I don't know what other gym's cleaning habits are. Spats prevent infections by covering up your bare skin. Seems like a good idea to me.

5) DON'T WEAR YOUR OWN PATCH.

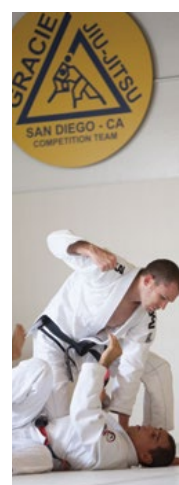
This is not an issue if you are visiting a school under the same umbrella as your home gym. But for example, if you train at Gracie Humaita and you are visiting an Alliance school, don't wear your Gracie patch. Some academies go so far as to make visitors wear their school's gi. When visiting a new school, the plainer the gi the better.

6) GO TO LEARN, NOT TO CHALLENGE.

If you go in and rough the students up, you may not be welcomed back. On the first visit, keep things light and friendly. As you get to know the guys you can train harder and be more competitive.

7) DON'T COACH THE STUDENTS.

It can be tempting to coach the students, particularly if they are lower belts and are making mistakes. I would recommend resisting this urge for your first visit at a new school. Remember, you



Above: Jake training with Royler Gracie at Gracie Humaita San Diego, California.

Below: Jake training with Andre Galvao at Atos HQ California.





Above Jake training with Tim Cartmell, Cleber Luciano's first black belt.

Right: Jake training with Terere at his academy in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Budo Jake is a black belt under Carlos Gracie Junior, CEO of Budo Videos and host of Rolled Up and This Week in BJJ.

13) ASK TO TAKE A GROUP PHOTO.

These make nice memories of your experience and it also conveys a message of appreciation to the instructor and his gym. Then post it on social media and tag me to let me know where you visited!

I hope these tips help you out. I have thoroughly enjoyed training in other gyms around the world. It's a great way to make friends in a different place, even if you don't speak their language! ■

are a guest. Unless you are invited to teach or you have a good relationship with the teacher, I would hold off on coaching. Just train and enjoy.

8) ASK ABOUT SPARRING RULES.

This is probably one of the touchier subjects. Break their rules and you might find yourself making an enemy real quick! Some schools allow heel hooks from day one. Others never do! Some allow kneebars and toeholds after brown belt. Some students stop if they get close to a wall. Others, particularly MMA gyms, keep going, using the wall to simulate a cage wall. By simply asking the instructor "are there any sparring rules I should know?" you will be on track to a good rolling session.

9) ALWAYS WEAR SANDALS OR SHOES WHEN WALKING AROUND THE GYM.

Of course we never wear shoes (unless wrestling shoes) on the mat, but resist the urge to walk barefoot to the locker room or bathroom. This is how germs are spread. Don't be that guy.

10) RESPECT THE INSTRUCTOR'S TEACHING.

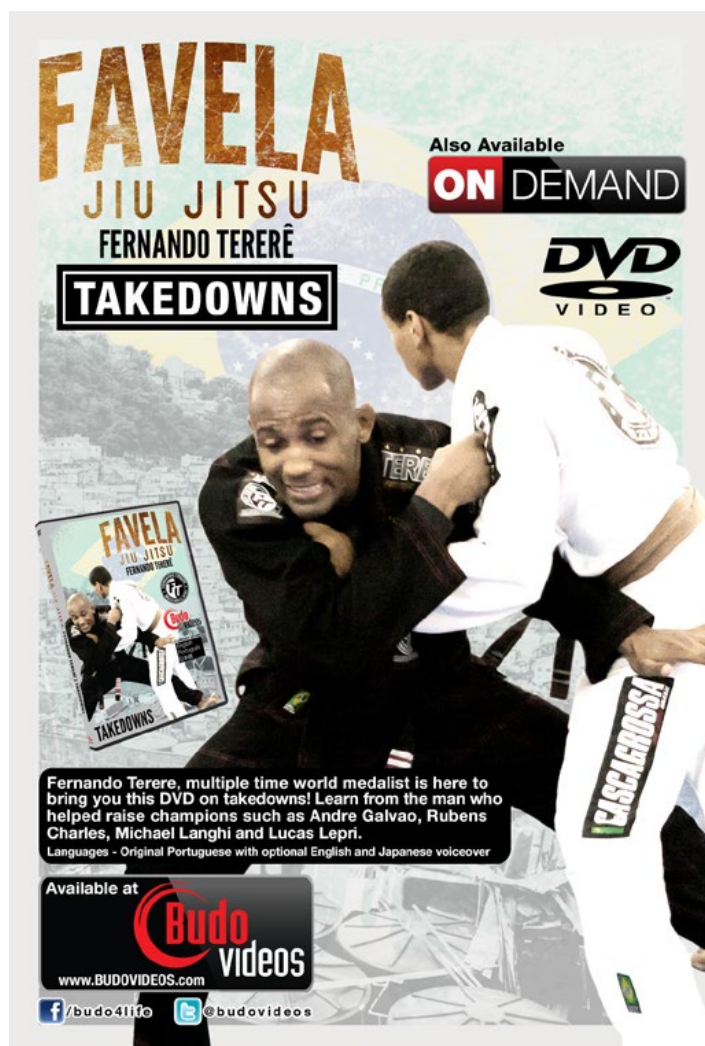
You might have been taught a different way of doing a move than the instructor shows. That's fine, but keep it to yourself. There are many different ways of doing things. Take the opportunity to learn and be humble.

11) OFFER TO PAY A MAT FEE.

Many gyms have a fee for drop-in guests. This is called a mat fee. Other gyms may have a policy of one free class, or a free week. If the gym is under the same umbrella as your home gym, there may be no fee at all, but in my opinion you should always offer. I also recommend giving the cash in an envelope; that's how it's done in traditional martial arts dojos.

12) LEAVE A REVIEW ON YELP OR OTHER SUCH SITE.

The instructor will definitely appreciate this and it will go a long way towards you being welcomed back.



WORDS: SAM JOSEPH

PICTURES: ALBERTO MARCHETTI

QUESTIONS THAT CAN HELP OUR BJJ

Over the years I have heard instructors say, “There are no bad questions”

The thought behind this is that asking questions leads us to greater knowledge of BJJ - whether they help to illuminate what does or does not work, the positive or the negative or what is or is not appropriate. While I agree that almost any question can be interpreted or answered in a way that can benefit us, there are some that are more conducive to supporting BJJ growth than others. Here are some questions that when asked on a regular basis can help us make headway on the mat!

QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?

Goals provide us with purpose and direction while promoting commitment. This is especially important in BJJ, as gaining real proficiency is more a marathon than a sprint. It takes time to progress on the mat and having goals makes it easier to “stay the course” when the going gets tough and we are tempted to quit. When we define our goals, both short and long term, we are proactively setting ourselves up for future success by committing to actions that will lead to specific outcomes.

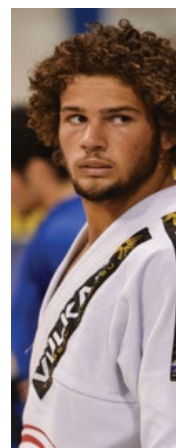
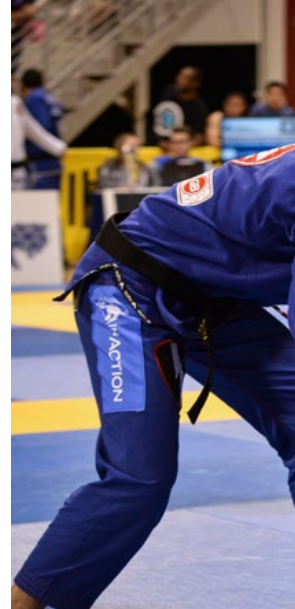
In my early training life, I established two goals: I wanted to fight and win in MMA and also medal at the BJJ Pan American tournament - the largest BJJ competition in the United States at that time. Specifying these as targets empowered me as they informed my daily choices. I simply had to ask myself if what I was doing and how I was doing it would help me reach those goals. In effect, by simply asking myself what I wanted to accomplish, I set in motion the events that led to my achieving both of those

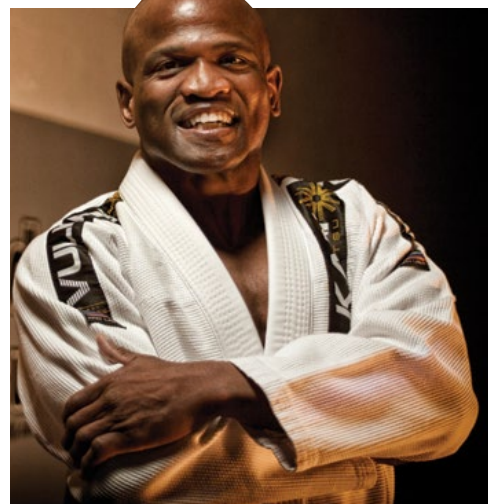
goals within my first three years of training. When challenges arose, my goals were often the things that kept me on track and on the mat. An added benefit was how these successes motivated and propelled me to bigger and better things in my BJJ journey.

My goals had to do with competition, but the beauty of BJJ goals is that they are totally customisable. They can be made around general fitness, gaining proficiency in certain techniques or positions and even BJJ-centric trips if those are more to an individual's liking. The common ground is that defining our BJJ goals is a great first step to success on the mat.

QUESTION 2: WHAT DO WE ENJOY MOST ABOUT BJJ?

In an era of serious BJJ athletes, sponsorships, tournament circuits and athlete branding on social media, this is an under-utilised question in BJJ. The fact is that when something is fun we often make time for it, and any instructor worth his/her salt will agree that mat time is the one thing we cannot do without as we seek improvement in BJJ. In light of this, clarifying what we find fun about BJJ so that we can focus on it during tough times is obviously a wise thing to do if we desire longevity in the BJJ lifestyle. I am reminded of something David Jacobs (owner/head instructor of the David Jacobs Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Academy) said to me as blue belts on a tournament trip. David and I came up together at the Yamasaki Academy in Washington DC and often discussed competing, the competition mindset and BJJ in





Sam Joseph is a 2nd degree Black Belt in BJJ under the Yamasaki Academy. He was awarded his black belt in 2007 and has vast experience as a teacher, BJJ competitor and MMA fighter.

general. David found BJJ after his Division 1 wrestling career had ended, so his perspective was built from a life-time of competitive grappling. We had a nice core group of people who competed regularly at our

“THE PEOPLE I KNOW WHO ARE HAPPIEST IN BJJ ARE PLUGGED IN AND PARTICIPATING IN ACADEMIES”

academy but David was clearly the most enthusiastic about it. His energy not only carried over to his day-to-day training in preparation for tournaments but it also positively impacted many of his teammates - including me.

When I asked him about it, he simply told me that he had never had more fun in sports than competing in BJJ. That was his big secret...he was having fun! I laughed at the time, but as I put more thought into what was fun for me about BJJ and focused on that, I found the challenges a little less daunting. I have continued to actively ask myself this question over the years and it has made the mat a much happier place for me. That has helped me to put in more mat time and that has fueled improvement in my BJJ. Fun can be a real tool for us as we seek growth as BJJ practitioners.

QUESTION 3: HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE?

John F Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country,” and inspired a nation. The key here being that by actively contributing to a group or organisation we see value in, we make the group better AND we improve ourselves. That same concept is applicable when we look at BJJ.

The people I know who are happiest in BJJ are plugged in and participating in academies and/or teams. The demographics of the groups are all across the board but there are similarities in that they are healthy organisations that encourage the growth and participation of their members. That participation also varies: training, helping out

with teaching, advisory work, community projects, volunteering, competing, etc. The common thread of these organisations is that they allow and encourage growth by providing opportunities for individuals to get involved.

When we take those opportunities, we help unlock our own potential on and off the mat. That kind of positive dynamic makes BJJ more than just exercise or a sport. BJJ becomes a force for good in our lives and when that happens, getting better on the mat is just an added benefit.

QUESTION 4: WHERE CAN MY BJJ IMPROVE?

Many of us have a natural tendency to focus on our strengths. We like to do the things we are good at and often minimize the importance of gaps in our BJJ games. This plays itself out on mats all over the world during sparring at the end of classes as we try to win by taking our training partners to our “A games”. While improving and adding layers to what we do best is a good thing, what often prompts massive growth in BJJ is our focus on and development of our weak areas.

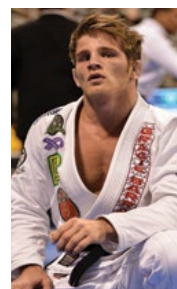
As a white belt, I felt much more comfortable on top during training. As I got closer to blue belt, I had to face the fact that I had a real gap in my game in terms of a lack of attacks from the guard. I chose to use this as an opportunity and began doing guard retention drills and working on sweeps before and after every class. I also started sparring from the bottom, which, while frustrating at first as people passed easily, slowly started bearing fruit. My bottom game got steadily better and developed into a real strength over time.

By identifying and focusing on a weakness in the right way, I prompted significant advancement in my BJJ. As my BJJ game matured, I continued to see the value of this type of self-evaluation and awareness under the tutelage of Fernando and Mario Yamasaki and Francisco Neto. They constantly pushed me to look beyond my strengths, both in preparation for tournaments and to round out my jiu jitsu. This helped me internalise the truth that growth can be stimulated whenever we are willing to face and address our weaknesses.

CONCLUSION:

The questions covered have in common an inherent quest for self-knowledge and how it can support progress in the BJJ journey. From novice to experienced black belt, they can be used as tools to stimulate growth and enrich the overall BJJ experience. While they are not the only helpful questions, they are certainly a great starting point as they have the potential to help any BJJ practitioner who is genuinely willing to ask and answer them on a regular basis.

See you on the mat! ■



WORDS: EMIL FISCHER

JIU JITSU IN POPULAR CULTURE

How awesome is it to find out that your favourite celebrity (musician, actor, mainstream professional athlete, etc.,) **does jiu jitsu**?

How about when you're watching TV or a movie and one of the characters does what appears to be a jiu jitsu move? Brazilian jiu jitsu has had the attention of the international community for less than 25 years, but in that time has garnered a lot of respect.

Popular culture has a way of bastardising things we love, but it also has the tendency to evoke a very proud reaction when we see things we love featured on a grander scale. Jiu jitsu has grown drastically in popularity since that first UFC, and as a result we have seen it begin to show up in pop culture in some really cool ways.

THE CELEBRITY CONTINGENT

The success of any given lifestyle, sport or other new phenomenon can often be measured by which celebrities, and how many of them, get into it. Over the past decade we've seen an emergence of celebrity practitioners who are proud of their jiu jitsu involvement.

In no particular order, here's a short list of some celebrities who practice the Gentle Art:

1. **Sean Patrick Flanery:** Best known for his work on *The Boondock Saints* and *Dexter*, the renowned actor is also a black belt and instructor at Hollywood Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.
2. **Ashton Kutcher:** Any list of current celebrity jiu jiteiros would be incomplete without Kelso from *That 70's Show*. Ashton Kutcher is a purple belt under Rigan Machado.
3. **Paul Walker (RIP):** Best known for his role in *The Fast and the Furious* films, the late actor was a brown belt before his untimely and tragic death and was posthumously promoted to black belt by world class coach, Ricardo Franjinha Miller.
4. **Maynard James Keenan:** Lead singer of Grammy award winning hard rock/heavy metal band Tool, Maynard James Keenan is also a long time jiu jitsu practitioner and was recently promoted to purple belt.

Below, left centre: Michael Clarke Duncan, the sonorous voiced actor who passed away in 2012 achieved the rank of blue belt in BJJ.

Below, right centre: Ed O'Neill, actor and black belt under Rorion Gracie.



5. **Clark Gregg:** Agent Coulson from *The Avengers* and *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* just recently earned his black belt.

6. **Guy Ritchie:** The famous director is a long time practitioner and recently received his black belt. The action sequences in his movies are very often crisp and well crafted.

7. **Ed O'Neill:** Any list of celebrities who practise jiu jitsu needs to include Al Bundy. The long time practitioner is a black belt under Rorion Gracie. He picked up jiu jitsu in the 90s, and has been an avid practitioner ever since.

8. **Rikki Rockett:** The drummer of the classic glam metal band, Poison, Rikki Rockett is one of the few black belt celebrity jiu jiteiros who has actually competed.

9. **Dave Bautista:** WWE superstar turned actor (perhaps best known for his roles in *Guardians of the Galaxy* and the recent James Bond release, *Spectre*) is also a BJJ purple belt. Chances are he has pretty decent pressure.

10. **Michael Clarke Duncan:** The sonorous voiced actor who passed away in 2012 achieved the rank of blue belt in BJJ.

Of course the list can go on from here; there are dozens of celebrities both major and minor who train, and some of them quite seriously. Chances are that if you do BJJ and you find out that a celebrity also does, your opinion of that person instantly improves.

SUBMISSIONS ON SCREEN

There are examples of submissions in mainstream productions as early as the 1940s, but the most famous actor to use a submission hold on screen was Bruce Lee. Bruce dispatched several of his opponents over the course of his fictitious career with a variety of chokes, and even executed an armbar on Sammo Hung in one of the opening scenes of *Enter the Dragon*. Seeing submissions on screen is always neat.

1. The Rear Naked Choke/Mata Leao

The RNC has been a move seen in movies and on TV shows for a very long time. This specific choke is very often used as a means for a character to quickly and quietly put away an individual who could otherwise be an obstacle. There are far too many examples to list, but the chances are that if you've seen an action flick you've seen an RNC at least a few times in popular culture.

2. The Triangle Choke

There is no move that better represents Brazilian jiu jitsu in the eyes of popular culture than the triangle. The triangle choke is to BJJ what the hook is to boxing or what the clinch is to Muay Thai: it is a sort of a signature move which, while it also exists



Above: Dave Bautista, WWE superstar and BJJ purple belt.



Far left: Maynard James Keenan, Lead singer of Grammy award winning hard rock/heavy metal band Tool and BJJ purple belt.

Left: Ashton Kutcher, movie star purple belt under Rigan Machado.

in some other arts, is considered a staple of BJJ. Some examples of the triangle choke in movies are:

1. **Clark Gregg** hitting a triangle choke when playing Agent Coulson in *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*

2. **Mel Gibson's** character used the triangle in *Lethal Weapon* to deal with Gary Busey.

3. **Tom Cruise** used a triangle to choke his own clone into unconsciousness in *Oblivion*.

4. In the first season of *Jessica Jones*, **Rachael Taylor's** character, Patricia Walker, tried to use a triangle choke to deal with an intruder, but he managed to escape it by slamming her. He would have been DQ'd in a BJJ tournament.

3. Miscellaneous Submissions

It's cool to see techniques which are considered staples of jiu jitsu in popular culture, but it is even cooler to see unusual moves performed:

1. In an episode of hit TV series *Gotham*, an assassin chokes the character James Gordon unconscious with a bow and arrow choke, using his tie.

2. The film *John Wick* is full of fantastically choreographed martial arts action, including a gi choke used by a hit-woman trying to kill the titular character. She uses the lapel of her own leather jacket to do a rather advanced choke which **Keanu Reeves'** character is able to escape.

3. In the popular TV series, *Person of Interest*, there is plenty of awesome hand to hand combat, but one episode in particular features a female MMA fighter, and in the viewers' first exposure to this character, we get to feast our eyes on a very nicely executed omoplata during one of her fights.

There are some inherent problems with some of the submissions shown in TV shows and movies. Very often, the technique is done sloppily, indicating that they didn't bring in legitimate practitioners to help with the choreography. In other instances, it is clear that someone who knew what they were doing was involved. Recently, the Machado brothers have made many posts on social media about their involvement with the second *John Wick* movie. It is also well known that Rorion Gracie helped with

the choreography of *Lethal Weapon*. If our art is to be represented in popular culture, it is great if it is represented accurately.

NOT IN THE FACE!

It is well known that many celebrities who train do not do so with the "general population" of jiu-jiteiros. There's a simple reason for this: most celebrities rely on their looks. If they get injured when rolling against a clumsy white belt or if someone doesn't like their acting style and goes extra hard, that could mean setbacks on set.

This is problematic for several reasons. For starters, anyone who gets promoted past blue belt without actively rolling is suspect. I say blue belt because there are organisations that do not allow white belts to roll at all due to issues with attrition, but in most cases I would be very suspicious of a blue belt who had only taken private lessons. It is very difficult to develop if you don't have people actively trying to submit you.

On the other side of this issue, there are some celebrities who legitimately dive into that shark tank and swim around. For example, Anthony Bourdain actually rolls wherever he goes. The issue here is that unless you have (or someone you know has) rolled with a given celebrity, you will inherently doubt them because you'll think that they, like many others, do not embrace the full BJJ experience, which includes the brutality of rolling. It's cool to hear that someone famous does Brazilian jiu jitsu, but knowing that there's a good chance that they only take private lessons does put a bit of a dampener on it.

At the end of the day, it doesn't really matter who trains how; the fact is that every celebrity who trains helps attract more people to the art, and every movie or TV show that shows jiu jitsu will make people wonder exactly what it is they saw, and could potentially help popularise jiu jitsu even more.

As jiu jitsu becomes ever more popular, we will see more celebrities who train. Mixed Martial Arts has been a major factor in this proliferation with crossover stars like Ronda Rousey, Gina Carano, Georges St-Pierre and Randy Couture all being featured in movies, and that trend is bound to continue. People like seeing actual martial artists perform the moves in movies that they trained to do in real life; it adds to the excitement.

With social media becoming a great tool to spread videos of jiu jitsu, we can see new clips and mentions of scenes coming up every day to let us know about the latest televised triangle choke. Hopefully, the choker has taken a few classes and spent some time in the gi. ■



Clark Gregg, Agent Coulson from The Avengers and Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D just recently earned his black belt.



Guy Ritchie, film director and BJJ black belt under Renzo Gracie.

WORDS: MATT JARDINE

PICTURES: CALLUM MEDCRAFT



BJJ - THE NEW RELIGION?

This year the Worlds' Masters was held in Las Vegas, the city that seemingly never sleeps, in a show of hedonistic debauchery.

It is a fun place if nothing else.

Four and half hours' drive away, in the neighbouring state of Arizona, lies the town of Sedona; the antithesis of Vegas. Arguably the spiritual capital of the US, it sits amidst red rock peaks as a beacon of the very best that religion and spirituality strive to offer.

For generations religion has provided its devotees with systems and structures that offer social connection, community and unity, moral guidance, lifestyle compassing and outlets to repent: faith, hope and charity; pathways toward happy, fulfilling and, ultimately, meaningful lives.

But now, in the 21st Century, religion is failing us. Ideals have given way to power struggles, war, hypocrisy and atrocities so heinous that Gods and deities would quiver at the interpretations we have layered over their well-intentioned teachings.

Still though, we covet all that religion originally promised us; we must, we're only human after all. Our desire for community, kindness, solace and meaning have not changed. Our DNA still reaches for higher states of being beyond the basics of our Neolithic forefathers. So where will we find it? Where can we look? Who or what will be the Avatar that brings it? Could the answer lie on the mats of Brazilian jiu jitsu? Could BJJ offer the best that religion has to offer without the worst that has drastically brought it to its knees? I think, possibly, it could.

It is an ambitious assertion I know, but, regardless, I present to you a code that may be an alternative to other, failing religions and a compliment to the more successful ones.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF BJJ

1. LOVE THYSELF

Like all great commandments, they are applicable on several levels depending upon the needs of the devotee. Our first commandment is no exception.

By loving ourselves, taking care of 'us' first, we are helping both ourselves and others simultaneously. Other religions have called this 'selfish selflessness'. Just as the evacuation instructions preceding an aeroplane's take off tell us, in case of loss of cabin pressure, to 'attach our own oxygen mask before helping others with theirs'. As we develop our skills and attributes we honour the gift of life that has been given to us. We pay tribute to it by living to our full potential.

On a purely practical level, loving thyself could simply represent enough self-respect to wash your gi regularly! Selfish persistence with personal hygiene will be more than beneficial to fellow sharers of the mats. The world will be a better place with just this single choice.

2. LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

Once we have learnt to love ourselves our self-confidence and esteem grow to the point where we are now better suited to helping others: the black belt

is more suited to aiding white belts than the blue.

We have evolved emotionally, technically, tactically and physically beyond the primary motivations of personal survival and we start to appreciate that life, our jiu jitsu, involves others. We need them, as they need us, and the truth dawns that the co-operation necessary to improve on the mat is the same that helps us lead happier and more fulfilling lives off it.

Loving our neighbour has been a staple of religions worldwide for generations but we have seen this ideal erode in recent times. Thankfully it is still a primary ethic in our jiu jitsu training; possibly our continued commitment to it, day after day, class after class, will shine a light that those who have lost their way may follow back toward its benefits.

3. LISTEN TO THE 'VOICE ON HIGH'

To listen to the 'Voice on High' you won't need an intermediary in robes to translate. It will be unnecessary to be in a meditative state, sacred lands will not have to be traversed to find it. Simply look to the front of your next class and there he or she is: your teacher, your 'Voice on High'.

With their belt comes a guarantee of knowledge, experience and troubles endured that make BJJ so wonderfully authentic and 'pressure tested'. Now just listen to them. Pay attention to what they are sharing with you. Suspend all other thoughts, judgments or ego statements that may stand in the way. More than likely they will have forgotten more than you have yet learned. Humbling isn't it?

Humility is the gift of this commandment.

4. LOOK AFTER THE MEEK

As we continue on this journey, our personal power combines with humility and we begin to feel responsibility for others. An emerging voice starts to speak out against tyranny, or at least the little things in life that we used to ignore but now meet head on.

We look after newcomers to the academy; guide them, encourage them, stay on after class to show them parts of a technique that they didn't absorb first time around. Our burgeoning strength helps us take others under our wing. We tell heavy handed students, yet to learn humility, to ease off and settle down. By now, we begin to comprehend that, actually, our jiu jitsu could be a possible method of self-defence. These are skills we can take back to our worlds outside of the academy. Our skills on the mat are growing and our personal communities are better for it.

5. DO NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOUR'S POSSESSIONS

So much more than 'not stealing' is covered by this fifth commandment. In fact, this is a pivotal time in our personal growth and an opportunity, if we continue to commit, to reap the highest levels of attainment that our religion, our BJJ, has to offer.



With each day of BJJ servitude, with each humbling submission reigned upon us, with each frustrating bind to a position we cannot escape, the grandiosity of our ego is tamed.

At a certain point, by the time of commandment five, we no longer envy and covet the possessions of our peers. We no longer feel anger at their competition victories, jealous of their promotions or secret joy at injuries that interrupt their relentless progress ahead of us.

Instead, as our ego shrinks we feel happiness for all that they are enjoying and use it as inspiration rather than threat. We are honoured to share the mat with them, no longer threatened by comparison. The fruits of our labours are paying off and we are becoming better persons all round.

6. TEACH FISHING

Life and religion are filled with stories of 'tough love': the seeming retraction of compassion in favour of harder lessons that strike to the core of the recipient.

Rather than providing direct answers, it is often a better tactic for long term growth to empower those in need to think, learn and discover solutions for themselves: to teach them to fish (rather than feed them fish), to use old religious parlance. There is much evidence to suggest that retention of information is more comprehensive using this method. Concepts based teaching and specific sparring in BJJ is commandment six in action.

Outside of the academy, it is possible to use the same idea to raise independent, confident and self-directed children; a goal every parent aspires to.

7. PRAY REGULARLY

You may or may not realise it, but prayer is happening all the time during our training, or certainly should be. To identify it, let's first change our possible understanding of prayer.

Each of us is familiar with traditional religions' use of prayer: a direct and deliberate act of communication with their chosen god or deity in order to ask for help, comfort or other requests and desires.

But the psychology of prayer is happening with or without a belief in a god or deity, and it is called 'goal setting'. In goal setting we replace the deliberate communication with a formal god to one with our own selves. We actively ask our deepest levels, whatever we believe them to be, to help us 'improve our guard game this week', 'work towards purple belt next month', 'don't tap to this white belt this roll'. Had you ever considered to whom you were internally talking?

Prayer-goal setting, is helping us all the time both on and off of the mat regardless of our race, colour, creed or religious persuasion.

8. HONOUR THE SABBATH

Religions share some advice that is merely practical, down-to earth, healthy advice. Commandment eight falls into this category.

'Sabbath' is religious terminology for a day of rest. It doesn't matter which day; Christians honour Sunday as the Sabbath day, Jews honour Saturday and Muslims honour Friday. Those of the BJJ religion can choose any day, but do choose one. It is easy to get swept away by our passion for our art and ignore the burnout that can creep up on us unannounced. For athletes, rest is essential for both mind and body. Use this commandment also to rest from the busyness of the world. Switch off your phone for a day, shut down your computer and spend the time instead with those you love. They will thank you for it.



9. HAVE FAITH

Standing central to all religion is the issue of faith; our BJJ version is no exception. Faith is arguably the most contentious part of religion; it can be used either positively or negatively but it is unmistakably powerful. We would hope that the self-attainment procured so far, via the previous commandments and our hours on the mat, will help us use our faith constructively.

In the religion of BJJ, our faith is to the art itself. Our solidarity is to the ideas of leverage, technique and efficient use of our bodies to overcome power, brawn and aggression. Many have come before us to show the way of BJJ and we stand in their wake, trusting the paths they have walked and the seas they have crossed.

Faith contains hope and trust and although it certainly can be abused, it can also be used as fuel for building healthy and happy communities both on and off of the mat. Have faith in faith.

10. ENTER THE DIVINE

The ultimate aim of any and all religions is to connect its followers with its highest levels and ideals; to enter the Divine, whatever definition that may entail.

It encapsulates the belief that there is always a higher level to attain than the crude and troublesome one we may find ourselves struggling with currently. Surfers transcend themselves via the search for the 'ultimate wave', athletes plunge unknown depths by trying to get, and stay, in the 'Zone', and meditators strive for 'expanded consciousness' through meditation and ritual.

For us, followers of BJJ, we honour the Holy Grail that is 'flow rolling': that moment when we become one with the energy of our partner. All that we attempt falls into place without struggle or strain; time slows as we see all that is necessary to defend many moments ahead of time; previously disjointed ideas line up in new found comprehension. In this state we experience, maybe for the first time, true peace and effortless ease, and it is joyful.

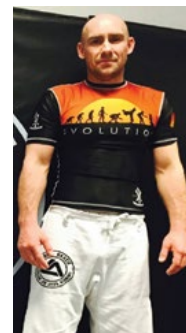
The journey from unknown to known is the longest one, and although we may not be able to replicate this state with consistency or by choice, we know now that it exists. It is a reality in our consciousness; this state of effortless ease, this state of grace, and we hold dear the peace and joy that comes with it.

The many hours on the mat, pressure testing our art, have led to glimpses of commandment ten's 'super state' as many classes have eroded our ego and anger. Aggression and fighting for our cause seem medieval now; the way of the thrashing white belt gives way to the ever finer realms of blue, purple, black and beyond.

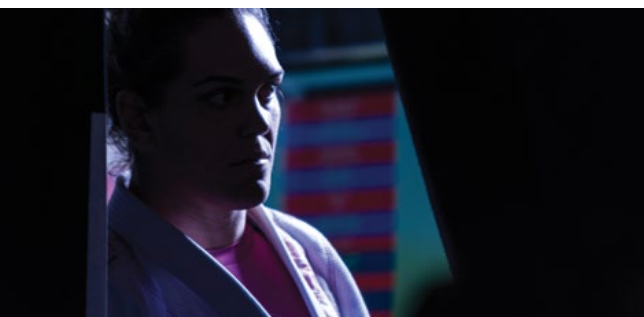
As the commandments suggest, there is great and good to be gained from our BJJ religion, as there is from more traditional religions across the world. But maybe our unique experiences learnt on the mat in academies globally have taught us that it is no longer necessary to struggle and strain to defend ourselves: our bodies, our minds or our values. Why bother? We've all had many fights; lost and been beaten, tapped many times and it's not so bad after all.

Once we let go of the violence of defending that in which we believe, once we ease into the ideas of leverage, flow and cooperation, we get to keep our ideals, our friends and, wonderfully, we live to roll another day.

Now they are ideals I'm prepared to worship. How about you? ■



Matt Jardine is a full time teacher of the Martial Arts, writer and author. He wishes you all a happy, healthy and successful remainder of 2016.



In this rendition of Masterclass, Ze shows some of his favourite techniques, including some dynamic sweeps, submissions and guard passing.



MASTERCLASS

ZE RADIOLA

Ze Radiola is a former professional surfer, a black belt under Carlos Gracie Junior and head instructor at Gracie Barra Pernambuco. Ze's academy has spawned numerous high profile jiu jitsu athletes, including Otavio Sousa, Lucas Rocha, Braulio and Victor Estima.

Pictures: Callum Medcraft



1: Starting from the spider guard with a lasso grip on your opponent's right arm.



2/3: Move your right foot to your opponent's left thigh, then pin their left sleeve to the mat.



4: Release your right grip and gain control of the back of your opponent's right elbow.



5/6: Using your hands, pull your opponent's arm forwards and at the same time kick your leg through to secure the omoplata.



7/8: Sit up and escape your hips away from your opponent to secure the submission.



OMOPLATA FROM SPIDER GUARD



1: Starting from the spider guard with a lasso grip on your opponent's right arm.



2: Switch your left leg from inside your opponent's right bicep to underneath their left armpit.



3: Next, place your right foot on the floor.



4/5/6: Extend your left leg towards your left hand side to knock your opponent off base.





7: As your opponent's shoulders hit the mat, maintain your grips to set up a submission.



8: Start to angle off, with your left leg coming across your opponent's chest to start the armlock.



9/10: Maintain control of your opponent's sleeves as you secure the armlock position.



11/12: Sit back and finish the submission.





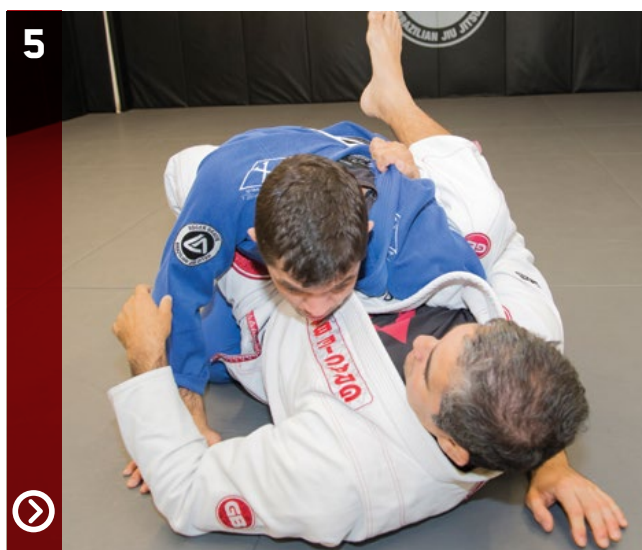
1: Starting in the closed guard.



2: Break your opponent's posture with your legs and slip your left thumb in the back of their collar.



3/4/5: Bring your right hand under your own right leg and pass your opponent's collar lapel from your left to right hand, securing Williams guard.



6: Next, control your opponent's right hand with your left hand.



7: Drive your left knee into your opponent's bicep and extend your hips to expose their shoulder.



8/9: Bring your right foot over to secure an omoplata.



10/11/12: Release your left hand grip, sit up and finish the omoplata.





1: Starting from the spider guard with a lasso grip on your opponent's right arm.



2: Switch your left leg from inside your opponent's right bicep to underneath their left armpit.



3: Your opponent anticipates you are going to try and sweep them to their right, so steps up on their right foot to defend.



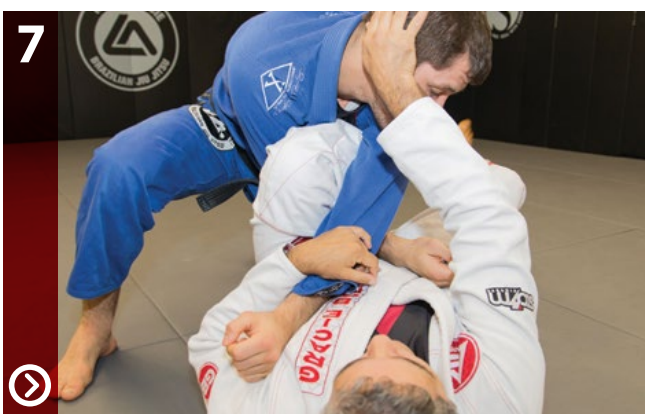
4: Instantly switch your hips so that your head is leaning off to your left, ready to attack with an armlock.



5: Drag your opponent's left arm across your body.



6/7: Push their head away with your right arm, at the same time maintain control of your opponent's left arm with your left hand.



8: Bring your right leg over to secure the armbar. This is a very tight position, as your opponent cannot escape either of their arms to attempt to defend.





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Send your questions for Braulio to u2us@bjjstyle.com and we will publish as many as possible in the next issue of *Jiu Jitsu Style*.

BRAULIO ESTIMA ASK THE DOCTOR

Braulio Estima is Jiu Jitsu Style's resident BJJ Doctor, helping prescribe our readers just the right tonic of tips to improve their grappling game.

Hi Braulio,
I was just wondering if you've ever kept a jiu jitsu journal or logged your training in any way over the years? I'm not the most organised person, and also very forgetful, so I thought the idea of creating a journal to record targets and notes from sessions could be cool. Be interested to see if you think this is beneficial.

Cheers - Harry

Hi Harry,
Personally I've never really kept a training log or anything physically written down for my jiu jitsu, no. When it comes to gym and strength work, I've never been very good at doing that on my own either, so I have always had to have someone there to train me. I have a personal trainer help to keep my strength training process on track, but I don't have this mentality with my jiu jitsu.

For me, I don't think there are things that you can really measure in BJJ like you can in strength training. One thing I have done previously with my jiu jitsu is actually having a written game plan. I've documented where I will allocate my time and what specific techniques I will look to work on in the build up to big competitions and stuff like that. I would give myself a couple of weeks to explore a new position and then move on to something else, but always referring to my written game plan. For example, I remember working really hard on my deep half guard, as I was c**p at it! I set aside a couple of months in my game plan to work on this, then back to general training. I think working to a general game plan is the only way I would work with documenting jiu jitsu training.



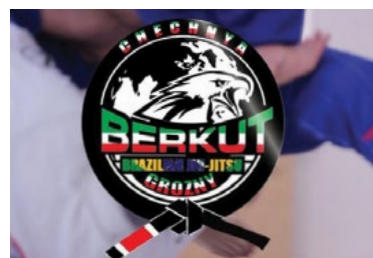
Hi Braulio,
I saw you were at the Berkut event in early November. What did you think of the show? I can't help but feel the final was a big let-down and I am slowly losing confidence in BJJ as a spectacle.

Thanks - Paul

Hi Paul,
I was actually there and commentating at the tournament. I was really, really excited by the fight card and to be honest, the show felt like it went by so quickly! For me, it was very enjoyable and there were lots of surprises in there, like Dean Lister and Jackson Sousa both getting tapped, then Caio Terra's sub was great.

They played different rules, with the 15 minutes sub only, then five minutes points, and I enjoyed this. There's always going to be different rules, and there's no correct answer as to what are the best rules. Personally, I really like the idea of a 20 minute fight, but with points right from the beginning. Why? Because if you make a commanding lead on points within the first ten minutes, then you may as well go for submissions, while the fighter with no points has to go for submissions. I guess with this system you would have to have penalties to stop people from being inactive when they have lots of points, but I'm just thinking out loud now!

I guess if you wanted to be critical, a few of the fights were a little bit boring, but overall it was a great show. When you get to competitions like this, the fighters play the rules as best they can, especially when there are substantial amounts of money available.



Dear Braulio,
I wanted to ask you about your approach to cross training. I've recently started doing judo once a week, as I do feel it's important to have some stand up in my arsenal for competitions. I know you've done a fair bit of wrestling, so what I wanted to ask was whether or not you fully immerse yourself in the wrestling when training it, or do you still think about how techniques would transcend into your BJJ? For example, in judo, I've been shown a fair few techniques that I feel would be bad for BJJ (expose my back etc.) and then can't get myself excited about learning them. Is this bad? Should I just 'go with it' and spend time on these techniques, even if I think they won't benefit my BJJ? I'm worried that by ignoring them, I could be missing a trick in developing my takedown game.

What do you think? - Jack

Hi Jack
This is a very interesting question. I have actually tried this from both perspectives: cross training and cherry picking stuff for my BJJ, and also cross training another martial art in its entirety. I believe, when it comes to a fight, some of the

most important things to consider are creativity, dealing with the unknown and reaction time. It's very hard to predict how a fight is going to go is essentially what I am saying. So, the more you know, the more you understand how to deal with any situation.

When I train wrestling, I train wrestling to learn wrestling in its entirety. This is the same with judo. If I am being shown a judo throw that means I have to expose my back, I still learn it. By drilling every aspect of a martial art, even if you don't use all of the techniques in your BJJ, you still gain a better understanding of the mechanics and develop sport specific strength. It's similar to training in the gi even if you don't fight in the gi.

What you need to take out of cross training is the framework and specific strengths associated with the chosen martial art. By excluding the things that you THINK won't work for your jiu jitsu, you lose out on lots of potential development and exploration as a fighter. Knowledge is one of the most important things we can gain as martial artists, as gaining knowledge is gaining tools and learning how to play the chess game of fighting.

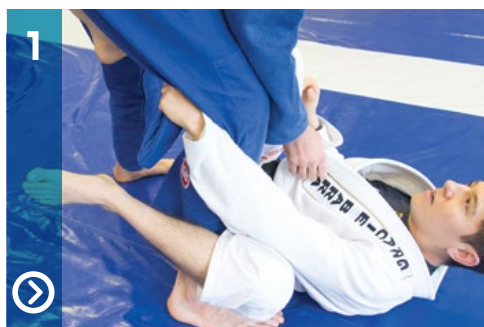
Collar Choke From Half Guard

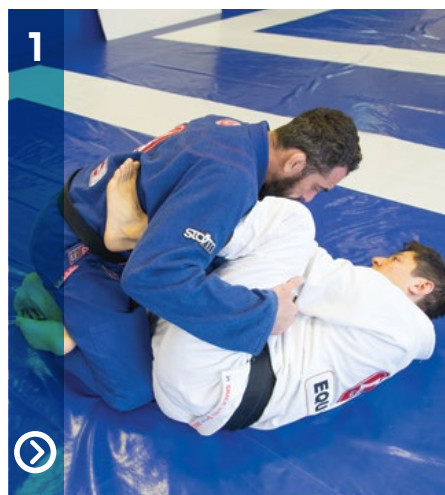
Hi Braulio,
I saw Caio Terra's awesome finish at the competition in Russia when caught in worm guard, so I wondered if there are any specific techniques you like to work on when the guy gets you in worm guard?

Best wishes - Claire

Hi Claire,
Caio Terra's finish was really awesome. Here's a little rundown of what he did.

1: Your opponent has your lapel wrapped around your right leg. **2/3/4:** Stand up tall and essentially step out of the lapel control, freeing up your right foot. **5:** From here, re-engage with your opponent and look to work from half guard, at the same time slip your right thumb inside your opponent's collar ready for the choke. **6/7/8:** Step over your opponent's head with your right leg. Kick your leg backwards and maintain your collar grip to secure the choke.





Estima Lock Or Guard Pass From Half Guard

Hey Braulio,
What do you do to pass half guard when the guy is really active with their knee shield? I find it very hard to smash past someone's guard when they are active with their knee across my chest.

Many thanks - Aaron

Hi Aaron,
Yeah, that can be a pain in the ass. I would recommend looking at the Estima lock, as it will either lead to a submission or a guard pass. Practise with caution when training!

1: Your opponent is in half guard and using the knee shield to keep you at bay. **2:** Start to wrap your opponent's left foot with your right hand, moving your body backwards to create space. **3:** Next, bring your chest forwards so that you have a grip on your opponent's left foot and it is pushing against your sternum. **4/5/6:** Lock up a rear naked choke grip and twist to your right to finish the submission. **7/8/9:** If your opponent is able to kick through and escape the footlock, you can simply continue forward with a leg drag pass.

A portrait of Matheus Diniz, a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu practitioner, looking directly at the camera. He has dark, wavy hair and a full beard. He is wearing a white and black rash guard with a circular logo on the chest that reads "MARCELO GARCIA" and "NEW YORK". The background is a blurred indoor setting, likely a gym.

Matheus is a black belt under Marcelo Garcia and shot to fame off the back of his grueling 20 minute submission match with Vinny Magalhaes at Metamoris 5, which ended in a draw.

SHEDDING THE GI

MATHEUS DINIZ

Sharing some of his nogi secrets in this instalment of Shedding the Gi is multiple

World and Pan Am Nogi champion, Matheus Diniz! Here, Diniz showcases some of his favourite back takes and sweeps from half guard and X guard.

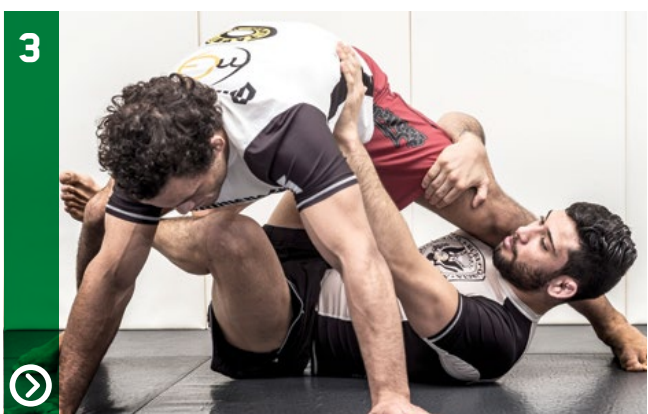
Pictures: Ric Ricard



1: You are on the bottom in a deep half guard position with underhook control on your opponent's left leg.



2: Bring your legs towards your chest and your left knee to the inside of your opponent's right thigh.



3: Push your opponent's body away with your left hand and extend your legs to establish X guard.



4/5: Bring your left arm and your head underneath your opponent's left leg to start the transition to the back.



6: Continue to rotate until both your knees are on the back of your opponent's thighs and grip their hips with your hands.



7/8: Extend your legs and sit forwards to secure back control.





1: Starting from a conventional X guard position.



2: Extend your legs to move your opponent forwards, forcing them to post on the mat with their hands. Maintain control of your opponent's left leg.



3: Post your left hand on the mat and start to sit up.



4: Maintain control of your opponent's left leg as you come up onto your knees.



5: Quickly drag your opponent towards you and transition to a bear hug around their waist.



6/7: Dive forwards and secure a seat belt grip, slipping in your hooks as you go.



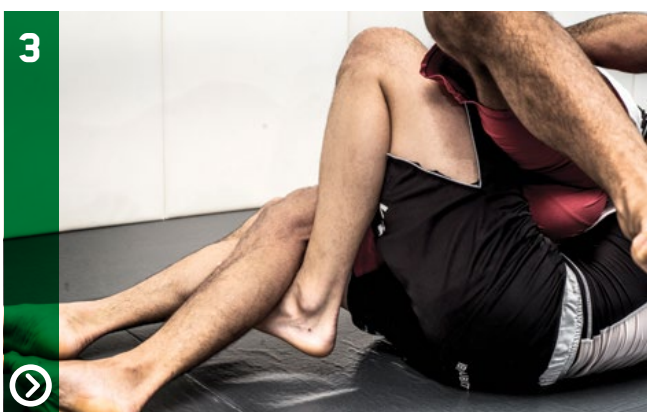
8: Secure a short choke finish.



1: You have secured an underhook and are in a solid half guard position.



2: Your opponent attempts to switch their base and bring their left leg to the other side of your body, but this sets up a back take.



3: As your opponent switches their base, bring your left shin behind their right knee.



4: Escape your head backwards by posting on your opponent's lat.



5: As your head arrives behind your opponent, you can now post on the mat with your right hand.



6: As your opponent arrives on their knees, secure a bear hug around their waist.



7/8: Secure a seat belt grip and start to insert your hooks for the back take and finish.





1: Starting from half guard with underhook control.



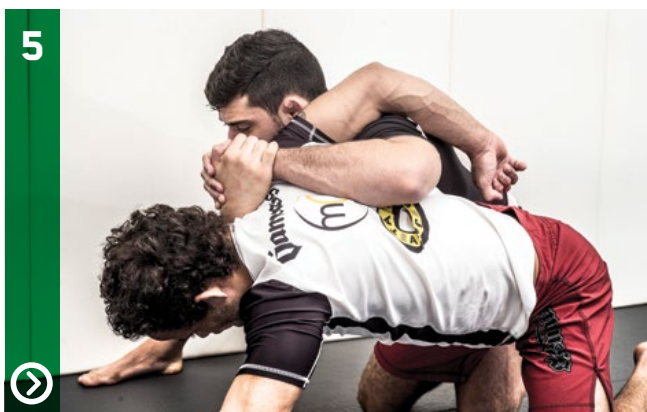
2: Sit up into a single leg position.



3: As you attempt to move towards your opponent's back, they insert a whizzer with their right arm.



4: Continue to your knees, then bring your left arm from around your opponent's waist to up and over their right shoulder.



5: Secure a gable grip around your opponent's right shoulder to counter the whizzer.



6/7/8: Step out with your right foot and drive forwards with your whole body to smash your opponent down and secure a sweep.

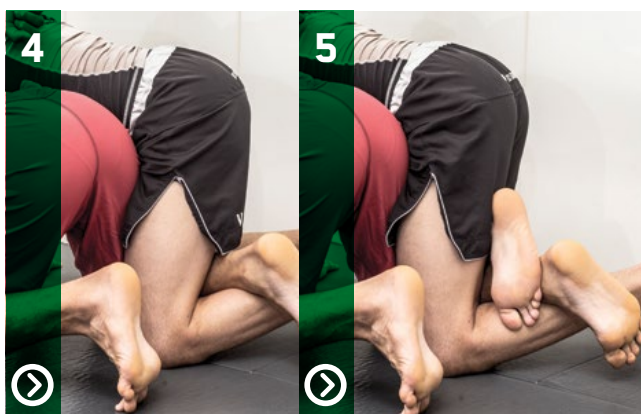




1: Starting from half guard with underhook control.



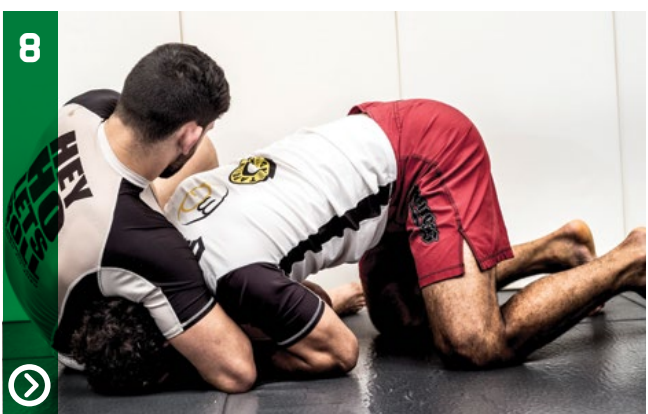
2/3: Use a pendulum motion with your right leg to help transition towards your opponent's back. As they insert the whizzer, drive your left arm up and across their right shoulder to weaken their defence.



4/5: Next bring your right foot over your opponent's right calf to help release the half guard as you now transition to the choke.



6/7: In a quick motion rotate 45 degrees towards your opponent's head, locking up their chin for the guillotine.



8/9: Maintain your grips and sit back for the high elbow guillotine.



WHIZZER DEFENCE TO GUILLOTINE



Nick Brooks is Jiu Jitsu Style's resident technique guru and a second degree black belt under Roger Gracie.

ATTACKS FROM SLEEVE AND TROUSER GRIPS

NICK BROOKS

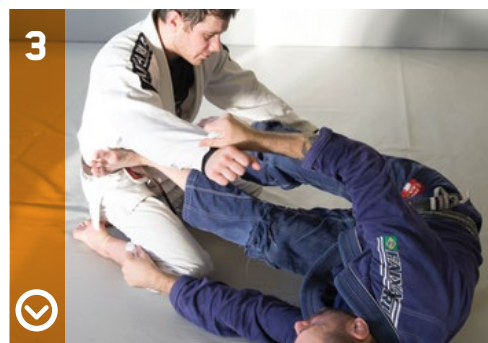
It can be very tough to deal with an opponent who uses the sit up guard effectively – especially if they are also a good wrestler. Here are a few passes and submissions that I find to work very well.



1: Starting in closed guard, break your opponent's grip on your lapel.



2: Maintain a cross grip on your opponent's right sleeve with your right hand and their trouser with your left hand.



3: Open the guard and put your foot on your opponent's hip.



4: Push into your opponent's hip and pull on their sleeve to break their posture.



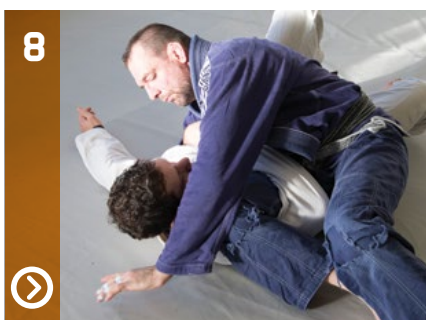
5: Push on their right bicep to unbalance your opponent.



6: As your opponent falls, take your foot off the bicep and pull their right sleeve towards you.



7: Sit through, keeping control of the sleeve and the trousers.



8: Once you are seated, let go of the sleeve and trousers.



9: Turn towards your opponent's head to control the sweep.



1: Starting in closed guard, break your opponent's grip on your lapel.



2: Maintain a cross grip on your opponent's right sleeve with your right hand and their trouser with your left hand.



3: Open the guard and put your foot on your opponent's hip.



4: Push into your opponent's hip and pull on their sleeve to break their posture.



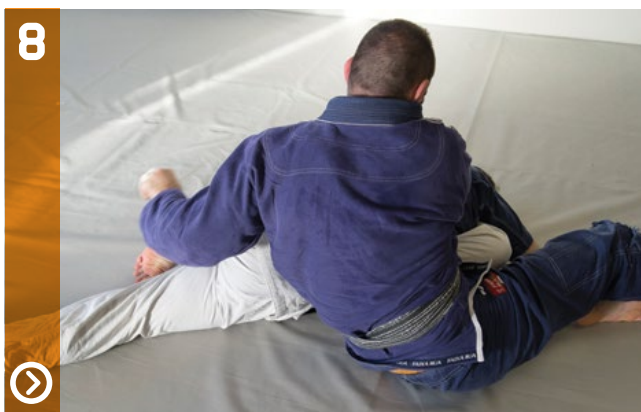
5: Slide your foot over your opponent's right bicep and lift your hip by pushing onto their hip.



6: Drive your right leg into the back of your opponent's head and your other leg into their armpit, to push them forwards and off balance.



7: Fold your opponent's right arm back and punch their right leg away to flatten them out.



8: Sit up and control your opponent's left armpit to complete the omoplata.



1: Starting in closed guard with control of your opponent's right sleeve with both your hands.



2: Break your opponent's grip on your lapel.



3: Maintain a cross grip on your opponent's right sleeve with your right hand and their trouser with your left hand.



4: Open the guard and put your foot on your opponent's hip.



5: Bring your right foot onto your opponent's right bicep and pull on their sleeve to break their posture.



6: Slide your foot over your opponent's right bicep and lift your hip by pushing onto their hip.



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7/8: Keep on rotating your body over your opponent's right arm.



9/10: Sit through to your knees and pull on your opponent's right sleeve to unbalance them.



11/12: Control your opponent's knee and belt with your elbow tight to their neck in order to stabilise the sweep.



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EATING ON A BUDGET, ESSENTIAL FOODS AND IS SUGAR EVER GOOD?



Cutting for a competition, bulking, dieting, getting shredded, moving up or down a weight class; it's all about **nutrition planning**.



"The most important thing when choosing food for yourself is to make sure that everything you choose is nutritionally dense and fits with your goals"

Everyone uses nutrition planning, it's just that some use it more successfully than others. From the bodybuilder who just wants to be as big and strong as possible, to the athlete who wants to dominate their sport, whatever you put into your body is your own nutrition plan.

When it comes to combat athletes, the main reason that they diet is for competition; either they want to make weight after having too many treats, or they want to fit into a weight class below so that they can be the biggest and strongest in that class.

Having a solid, intelligent nutrition plan is always a good idea. In my opinion, excess body fat serves no purpose in combat sport and athletes would always perform better with a little less fat and a bit more muscle. Yes, some make the argument that more body fat can equate to more leverage in certain moves or feeling stronger. However, in my experience it's generally the overweight athletes who are making this argument. I have never spoken to a single person, athlete or otherwise, that didn't feel a hell of a lot better by getting in great shape.

The problem comes with knowing how to do it right!

As always, if you are looking to get a better understanding of nutrition, then I highly recommend speaking to your coach or a professional about having a plan set up for your individual needs. I would also advise you to consult your doctor before undertaking any kind of new nutrition plan.

"A FACTOR THAT MOST PEOPLE OVERLOOK, BUT MAKES A MASSIVE IMPACT ON NUTRITION PLANS IN GENERAL, IS PREPARATION"

Many people have terrible experiences when it comes to dieting as they simply don't know what they are doing. It's hardly surprising as there are so many schools of thought on the subject and they often contradict each other, so who isn't going to get confused! Where do you start? Do you fast? Do you carb cycle? Do you have cheats? The list of confusing topics is endless.

The topic of setting up a diet for combat sports is a meaty one and I could easily fill a few books with ideas and strategies (I should probably get on that). But I have decided to find out what questions you have, what has been holding you back and try to give you some answers.

Recently we posted on the BJJ Style Facebook page and other social media asking for your questions, and how I can help. A lot of people responded and while I am sorry that I can't all your questions, here's a selection of my top tips.

FIVE FOODS ESSENTIAL FOR PERFORMANCE

It is impossible for me to list five foods that are absolutely the best for you out of all the available foods. The most important thing when choosing food for yourself is to make sure that everything you choose is nutritionally dense and fits with your goals. Starting with whole, natural foods that grow is always your best bet.

It is also important to be mindful of the effect certain foods have on your body. Do they bloat you? Do they make you feel gassy? Do you feel full of energy after eating? Do you feel sleepy? These are the things that you should pay close attention to when selecting foods.

With that being said, here are five foods that you will always find in my house. Remember that these are foods that work for me, but feel free to try them.

1. Grass fed butter (great fat source)
2. Whole eggs (as above but also a great source of protein and vitamin A)
3. Lean steak or fatty fish of some description
4. Broccoli
5. Tomatoes

ARE SUGARY SNACKS BEFORE TRAINING GOOD OR BAD? CAN SUGAR EVER BE GOOD?

This is a great question! The first thing you need to ask is what are your goals? If you are looking to lose some fat I would stay away from sugar altogether. However, if you are looking to add muscle or move up a weight class then sugars can indeed be added to your diet.





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If I am going to add in some extra fast acting carbs in the form of sugar I will put them in the post workout meal for clients. My favourite method (stolen from Coach John Meadows) is to have some kids' cereal, with chocolate whey mixed with water as a milk. This will help with recovery by restoring glycogen to muscle and helping to funnel nutrients to muscle by using the sudden jump up in insulin (this is a whole article on its own).

I would start small and keep an eye on body fat levels if you are going to try this approach. It can be great if you tolerate carbs well or it can really backfire! Make sure you track everything.

TRYING TO EAT WELL ON A TIGHT BUDGET

I get this one all the time. The secret is to buy smart. Try these tips.

- 1. Always visit the reduced section in the supermarket, especially late at night.**
- 2. Buy in bulk and freeze things in weekly portions.**
- 3. Buy frozen veggies and lean meat (fatty things like steak doesn't taste right after being frozen).**
- 4. Buy supermarket own brand produce.**

MANAGING MEAL TIMES WHEN YOU WORK SHIFTS (DAYS TO NIGHTS ETC) - ANY ADVICE?

This is tough, as shifts mess everyone up. The trick is to try to establish a routine as quickly as possible. This means going to bed at the same time and getting up at the same time when you can. Meal timing can be important but it isn't the 'be all and end all'. The most important thing is to get your total calories in and hit your macro guidelines. For quite a lot of people on shifts it is a lot easier for them to eat three big meals rather than a lot of smaller ones.

Another factor that most people overlook, but makes a massive impact on nutrition plans in general, is preparation. If you have all your meals prepared and ready to go it is a lot easier to just pop something in a microwave rather than starting something from scratch.

The swap from days to nights is always tough as it wreaks havoc on your body. I would make sure that you have your main meals prepped and make sure that you are drinking a bit more water than usual.

These are all great questions that highlight the vast differences in people's lives that can affect their nutritional approach. Remember that there is no perfect diet. The best plan is the one that fits your lifestyle that you can do consistently and that gives you the best results.

This is going to be a regular column so I am really looking forward to helping a bunch of you! If you have any questions then please send them to u2us@bjjstyle.com.

Stay healthy,

Mike



WORDS: REBECCA HILL

PICTURES: ALBERTO MARCHETTI

WHY WE LIMIT OUR BJJ POTENTIAL - AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Sometimes the only thing holding you back **is yourself**

Sometimes we want to perform well but bizarrely end up doing and saying things which undermine our own development and performance. This kind of counter-productive behaviour is a pretty common human phenomenon which psychologists call self-handicapping.

WHAT IS IT SELF-HANDICAPPING?

Researchers have identified two ways that people self-handicap, generally in life, and specifically in the sporting arena. With *behavioural* self-handicapping, the athlete actually creates an obstacle to performing as well as possible. With *claimed* self-handicapping, the athlete gives excuses for a less-than-optimal performance before the event.

After doing jiu jitsu for a while, everyone gets to know the classic self-handicapper at their gym. They're the person who misses training in the run up to a grading or seminar, parties hard the evening before a competition, reduces effort in sparring or pursues unrealistically difficult goals.

They're also the person who regularly reminds you of their injury or illness, tells you at every session you how tiring their day at work has been and how hard it is to train alongside the stresses of their home life. And if we're honest, we can also probably recognise some of these strategies in ourselves too.

WHY DO WE SELF-HANDICAP?

We are most often at risk of self-handicapping when we anticipate failure and we are concerned about

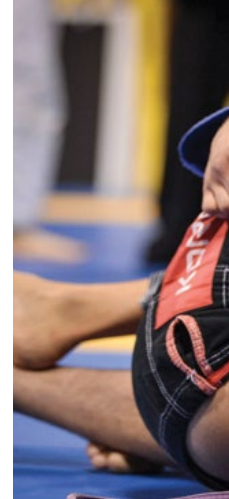
being judged negatively by our instructor, teammates, friends or spectators. Creating or claiming a hindrance allows us to attribute a poor performance to external or uncontrollable circumstances rather than a lack of ability. It allows us to believe it's not our fault when we don't do as well as we hope. When we lack confidence in our jiu jitsu, this helps to preserve self-esteem. In this situation, self-handicapping serves a self-preservation function.

But people high in confidence who anticipate success are not immune from self-handicapping either. It can also be a way to boost self-esteem and create a positive impression in social situations. If you perform well despite facing challenges, then you and other people can conclude that you must be highly competent. Here, self-handicapping serves a self-enhancing function.

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

It seems that self-handicapping helps us maintain a positive sense of self, feel confident about our BJJ skills, and manage other people's impressions of us in jiu jitsu. However, there are downsides to self-handicapping. Creating obstacles may help us to manage our self-concept in the short term but there are more long-term drawbacks.

The most obvious cost of self-handicapping is the direct negative impact on learning and performance. It's difficult to get better at jiu jitsu when you're not practising regularly, not giving 100% in training or doing other things which have a detrimental physical





Dr Rebecca Hill is a Psychologist chartered by the **British Psychological Society** with a **PhD in Sport and Exercise Psychology**. She is also a **BJJ black belt competitor under Professor Victor Estima** and a **current European Champion**. She **blogs about sport psychology and BJJ** at rebeccahill.com.



and mental effect on you and your BJJ. In short, self-handicapping is self-sabotaging behaviour and prevents you from achieving your full potential.

Beyond that, there are also social costs to self-handicapping. Whether coaches and team mates accept a jiu jitsu practitioner's self-handicapping depends on the believability of the excuses. The perceived trustworthiness of the self-handicapper is also influenced by the amount of control that friends believe he or she has over the situation. If someone chooses to go out and party the night before a competition, team mates might be less forgiving than if someone misses training due to a big project at work. Beyond the sporting environment, research also suggests that people perceive those who use self-handicapping strategies to be less confident and less motivated than those who don't self-handicap.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT?

Even if self-handicapping strategies help an athlete to maintain their sense of self-worth, we know that they are not healthy in the long run. Thankfully, there are a number of things we can do to tackle the problem. Directly targeting the self-handicapping itself might not work so well, especially if a person doesn't realise their actions are sabotaging their own performance. Here are some practical suggestions for approaching the issue:

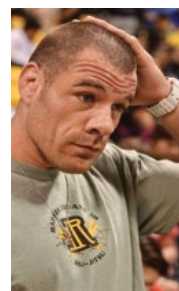
1. Awareness. On a personal level, try to be honest with yourself and recognise when you're using self-handicapping strategies. Make an effort to distinguish between genuine reasons for under-performing and when you're making excuses. As an instructor, if you think your student is open to your support then gently highlight when they are starting to show self-limiting behaviour.

2. Motives. Addressing the behaviour without considering the underlying causes won't lead to long-term behaviour change. If we figure out why someone self-handicaps, we can help to deal with the reasons behind their actions and words. Often self-handicapping goes hand-in-hand with increased levels of anxiety, concern about performance being judged publicly, and a desire to manage other people's impressions of them.

3. Social environment. Instructors have a key role to play in influencing the jiu jitsu environment and the aspects which are emphasised within it. A coach is more likely to have students who self-handicap when he or she publicly compares students to one another, stresses winning and values the outcome of performance. A coach can encourage a more constructive approach by focusing on athletes as individuals, minimising inter-personal comparisons and recognising when students find situations threatening to their self-esteem. Of course, sometimes we have to give negative feedback to students but we can carefully consider how we give it.

4. Process versus performance. A consistent theme in sport psychology is the benefit of focusing on personal progress versus out-performing others, and this is again true in the case of self-handicapping. When we concentrate on mastering jiu jitsu, it creates a more positive emphasis on learning and development.

It can take courage to change a long-standing habit of self-limiting thoughts and actions. Even when we put in our best effort, things don't always go to plan. But when we manage to put our egos to one side, along with the possibility of failure, we open ourselves up to the possibility of achieving our full potential. So which option do you choose? ■





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REVIEW CORNER



NEWAZA APPAREL 'SEEKER' RASHGUARD & SHORTS

NEWAZAAPPAREL.EU SHORTS: £44.99 RASHGUARD: £37.99

Drum roll please... Newaza Apparel has finally arrived in Europe! After what felt like years of watching from afar (or paying huge import charges) as our American compadres enjoyed the release of awesome rashguards, spats and accessories, EU residents can now pick up Newaza gear at a great price.

Newaza Apparel was formed by Travis Warner, Casey Halstead and Pete Bradford, who all train and love jiu jitsu. As you can tell from the brand's products so far, they've really made a name for themselves with their crazy designs, colours and generally 'different' approach to creating BJJ gear.

You probably remember Eddie Cummings' recent wins at the Eddie Bravo Invitational and Polaris Pro 2, and we bet you remember the epic gear he was wearing? We couldn't wait to get our hands on our first Newaza Apparel products, their 'seeker' rashguard and shorts, which are a co-branded release alongside another of our favourite brands, Scramble.

Straight off the bat we can reassure newbies to the brand that these products are top quality when it comes to construction and durability. The rashguard was one of the most comfy we've ever worn, fitting perfectly in all the right areas and not tightening under the armpits like some other products. All design elements are sublimated, so there's no risk of peeling or flaking. Talking of design, we are sure you'll agree, it's simply breathtaking!

The shorts equal the rashguard in terms of both design and construction quality. The waistband consists of an elastic drawstring housed by a Velcro front fastening, which is both comfy and easy to fasten. Even though they're very durable, they're also very light and great to train in, giving you the perfect mix of both worlds.

The seeker rashguard and shorts are just one of Newaza Apparel's range of products now available in the EU, and you can expect plenty more whacky and - let's face it - epic gear to come during 2016.



JOINT GUARDIAN PERICLES ONE GRAPPLING SPATS

JOINT-GUARDIAN.COM FOR €64.90

If you're on the mat regularly, without doubt you will have suffered from sore knees – it's something that just can't be avoided. Be it from continuous wrestling and judo takedowns or just moving around from sparring on the knees, we are all susceptible to this type of wear and tear. Emerging Austrian brand, Joint Guardian, have come up with an ingenious way of adding knee support to a pair of traditional grappling spats.

We've never been a fan of wearing conventional kneepads, so as soon as we saw Joint Guardian's innovative offering we were dying to test them out, and we weren't left disappointed. The spats have specially constructed pockets on the inside of the garment so you can easily slip in the custom made knee padding. The padding was not only fantastic in that it offered a great level of support during training, but also very easy to take out for washing. Joint Guardian also makes sure to send you two pairs of kneepads should your first set wear out.

The spats themselves are extremely comfortable and constructed to a high standard. It's obvious that a great deal of love and attention has been paid to making sure the fit, stitching and general material used are top notch, and they are as good a pair of grappling tights as we've ever worn. For us, the biggest benefit with this product is that they eradicate the need for conventional kneepads, which often slip off during training. As the Pericles One spats have the kneepads built in, they stay firmly in place for the whole session and were fantastic for wearing underneath a gi.

Coming in at €64.90 (roughly £47) these spats are slightly more expensive than competitor brands, but don't forget you are also getting a pair of kneepads thrown into the mix, which instantly makes this a very well-priced product. If that wasn't enough, Joint Guardian are a member of the '1% for the Planet' campaign, which means they donate 1% of their profits to environmental projects.

THE COMBAT CODES

AMAZON.CO.UK - PAPERBACK AND KINDLE

Remember box office hits like *The Hunger Games* or Arnold Schwarzenegger's classic *The Running Man*? Ok, so imagine these sci-fi inspired worlds, and then add a substantial dose of mixed martial arts into the equation - now you'll start to gain a picture of *The Combat Codes*.

Brazilian jiu jitsu brown belt and author, Alex Darwin, has created a world that sees diplomacy revolve around MMA, with fights taking place within the legendary 'circles'. The plot revolves around a former fighting champion turned talent scout, who stumbles across a young fighter embarking on a mission to reach 'The Surface' and gain answers to his own mysterious past. The settings and story lines are gripping, serving up a fantastically unique mix of sci-fi textures and BJJ references to keep you grinning while reading.

The regular fight scenes within the novel are detailed and well thought out, clearly aimed at jiu jitsu and MMA practitioners. Reading Darwin's descriptions of grappling transitions and submissions within a sci-fi context is refreshingly unique.

Fellow BJJ and MMA fans will notice there are plenty of in-jokes to be found in *The Combat Codes* too. A certain Jos Danahar crops up as having a "master grasp of strategy", there's tough striker Mack Hunt, or you could head to Saulo's Circle. There's a line that could have come right off Ryan Hall's DVD on the triangle, giving

some technical tips. Darwin even manages to discuss some hot topics in BJJ today within the context of his book, particularly the prevalence of performance enhancing drugs in our sport. Generally *The Combat Codes* wears its cyberpunk aspects lightly, but there's enough gadgetry and the like in there to keep us sci-fi fans happy.

Finding a novel that is both well written and based around BJJ is extremely unique, so on that basis alone we cannot recommend this book enough. If you're also a fan of sci-fi, then *The Combat Codes* should be promoted to the top of your essential reading list.



ONNIT LABS ALPHA BRAIN

ONNIT.COM FROM €34.95

It's been a long time coming, but we've finally got our hands on Onnit Labs' flagship product, Alpha Brain. Fans of Joe Rogan's popular podcast will no doubt be aware of Onnit Labs and their ethos as a "total human optimisation website", so we were keen to see the benefits of their products.

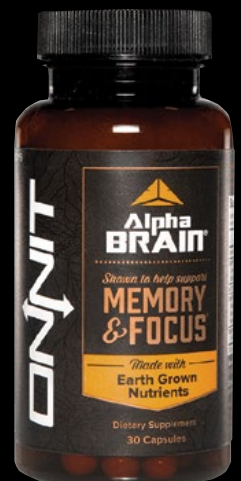
Alpha Brain is a nootropic product, which means it is designed to improve memory, processing speed and focus. When taken before sleeping, nootropics are also advertised as being able to aid an enhanced dream state.

As a company, Onnit Labs pride themselves on creating all of their products from natural ingredients. Alpha Brain is advertised as being made with "earth grown nutrients" and is a non GMO (genetically modified organisms) product.

Though many still believe nootropic products to act more as placebos than anything else, Onnit Labs have gone the extra mile to reassure customers that there's genuine substance behind Alpha Brain. Two clinical trials on healthy people conducted by the Boston Centre for Memory showed significant improvements in memory, processing speed and focus.

We stuck to the guideline dosage of two capsules at varying times during the day across a test period of one month. Though there were few signs of help with focus during the mornings initially, we found that once we stopped all caffeine intake before 11am, focus levels still seemed heightened thanks to Alpha Brain.

However, it was afternoon usage that was by far the most beneficial. Two capsules around 3pm definitely helped with focus and processing speed when carrying out our tasks (namely writing) that were usually harder to complete as the day went on. Though we didn't experience much in the way of a heightened dream state, the afternoon benefits of Alpha Brain were enough to keep us using the product past this review in working life.





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GI SPOTLIGHT

MANTO 'VICTORY' KIMONO

OVERVIEW

Clean, fresh and stylish – as soon as we saw the 'Victory' kimono, we knew we had to have it. This is the highest quality gi that Manto have ever made, and offers a modern cut and subtle design elements alongside eye catching black and gold colouring.

JACKET

The jacket cut and fit was extremely good straight out of the bag, and you can tell that real attention has been paid to the smaller details when building this gi. The lapels line up and fold over perfectly when fastening your belt, and the skirt sits nicely around the top of your thigh instead of half way to your knees like some more old school products. The main design features include prominent Manto logos on the right shoulder and upper left arm, as well as on the lower back. There is also a cool little silhouette of a fighter raising their arm in victory on the lower left section of the jacket – a nice touch.

TROUSERS

The trousers are constructed from ripstop cotton and feel as tough as nails. Unlike some ripstop trousers, they still maintain a high level of comfort when you're three rounds into sparring and drenched in sweat. As is becoming standard, the knee areas are reinforced to increase durability and the drawstring rope is fastened with four belt loops. Again, there's nothing too flashy on the trousers in terms of design, just subtle use of Manto branding on the right hip and lower leg. Just like the jacket, the gold detailing really offsets against the black kimono.

DETAILS

Manto have long been connoisseurs of subtle yet extremely stylish branding, and the Victory kimono is no different. We are particularly fond of the Manto logo positioning on the bottom right side of the back of the jacket, as well as the small fighter silhouette on the lower left section on the front of the jacket.

SUMMARY

Ok, so we probably have an unhealthy obsession with black kimonos (something to do with our childhood desire to become ninjas) but Manto really have excelled themselves with this offering. The jacket is cut like a suit, the 450gsm pearl weave is very soft and it's an all around fun product to train in. At €124 (roughly £92) the kimono also offers good value for money.

AVAILABLE VIA [MANTOSHOP.EU](https://mantoshop.eu)

FOR €124 & [MANTOUSA.COM](https://mantousa.com)

FOR \$139.95



TOURNAMENT REVIEW

PICTURES: BLANCA MARISA GARCIA



EDDIE BRAVO INVITATIONAL V

The fifth instalment of the Eddie Bravo Invitational saw some of the best lightweights on the planet face-off at the **Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles, California.**

The athlete roster included a mixture of high profile names, such as ADCC veteran Rani Yahya and Eddie Bravo's first black belt Denny Prokopus, as well as relative unknowns such as Australia's Lachlan Giles. In fact, it was Giles that pulled off the shocks of the tournament by beating 10th Planet Jiu Jitsu stalwart Nathan Orchard in the first round, before claiming the scalp of Rani Yahya via submission in the quarter finals.

As predicted, it was Tom DeBlass black belt Garry Tonon who rose to the top. With his teammate Eddie

Cummings dropping out of the competition late due to injury, Tonon once again stole the plaudits, finishing all four of his fights via submission and cementing his status as an EBI legend. Tonon's latest lightweight crown is added to his previous two welterweight titles from 2013 and 2014.

There were also three super fights on the EBI 5 card, which saw two sets of youngsters gain their 10 minutes of fame, as well as Lila Smadja edging out Talita Alencar in a hard fought contest.

1ST ROUND RESULTS

Garry Tonon vs Stephen Martinez

Garry Tonon wins via bulldog choke

Javi Vasquez vs Lucas Brown

Javi Vasquez wins via armbar

Lachlan Giles vs Nathan Orchard

Giles wins by escaping nine seconds faster during overtime

Rani Yahya vs Jason Buzzard

Rani Yahya wins via mounted guillotine

Denny Prokopus vs Christian Carillo

Denny Prokopus wins via triangle

Rafael Domingos vs Geoff Real

Domingos wins via head and arm choke

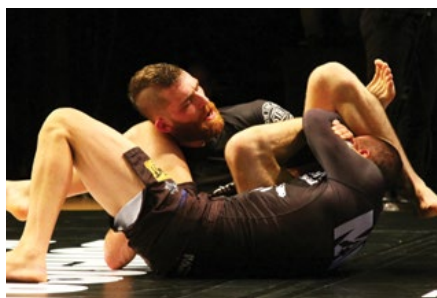
Kim Terra vs Juan Bernardo

Kim Terra wins via rear naked choke during overtime

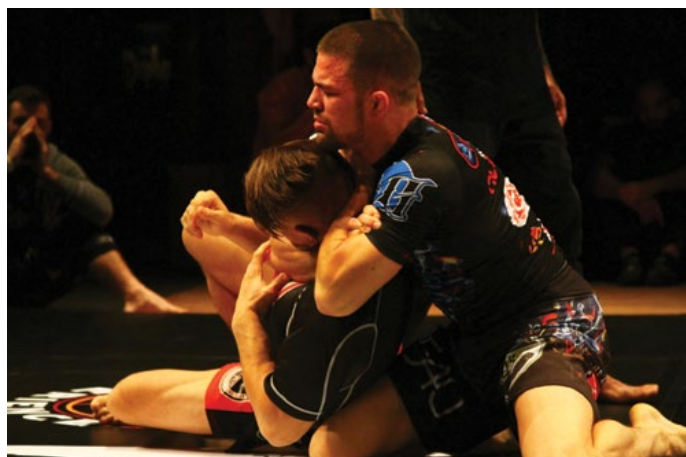
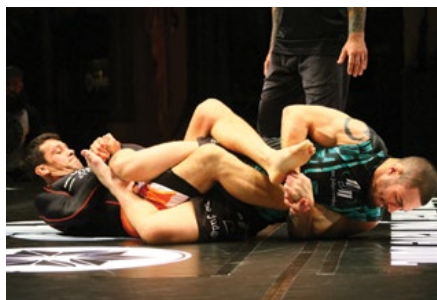
Ruben Alvarez vs Jon Ortega

Ruben Alvarez wins via heelhook

Below: Garry Tonon vs Stephen Martinez.
Below Right: Denny Prokopus vs Christian Carillo.



Left: Lachlan Giles vs Nathan Orchard.
Below Left: Ruben Alvarez vs Jon Ortega.
Below: Javi Vasquez vs Lucas Brown.





QUARTER FINAL RESULTS

Garry Tonon vs Javi Vasquez
Garry Tonon wins via heelhook

Lachlan Giles vs Rani Yahya
Lachlan Giles wins via armbar

Rafael Domingos vs Denny Prokops
Rafael Domingos wins via armbar during overtime

Kim Terra vs Ruben Alvarez
Kim Terra wins via rear naked choke during overtime



EBI OVERTIME RULES

A unique feature of the EBI tournament is the inclusion of a specifically formatted overtime period should there not be a submission within each 10 minute match.

After the 10 minute buzzer sounds, the match enters overtime, which consists of at least one (maximum three) overtime periods with two phases in each period. For the first phase of the first period the referee selects one athlete at random to start from either their opponent's back with seat belt control, or from 'spider web' (armlock position from mount with the athlete on the bottom choosing their defensive grips).

The attacker must look to submit, while the defender looks to escape to any other position. Once there is either a submission or an escape, phase one is complete. In phase two the grapplers' roles are reversed. If a competitor scores a submission from the attacking position and also escapes from the defensive position, they are declared the winner. If both competitors escape, or submit, they proceed to a second period (again, with two phases) exactly like the first.

If there is no winner after the second period then there is a final third period.

If there is still no winner at the end of three periods, the total of times taken for submissions and escapes is added together and the grappler with the fastest overall time wins.



Above: Rani Yahya vs Jason Buzzard.
Top Left:
Garry Tonon vs Javi Vasquez.
Left Middle:
Kim Terra vs Juan Bernardo.
Left Middle Bottom:
Lachlan Giles vs Rani Yahya
Left Bottom:
Kim Terra vs Ruben Alvarez

SEMI FINAL RESULTS

Garry Tonon vs Lachlan Giles

Garry Tonon wins via armbar

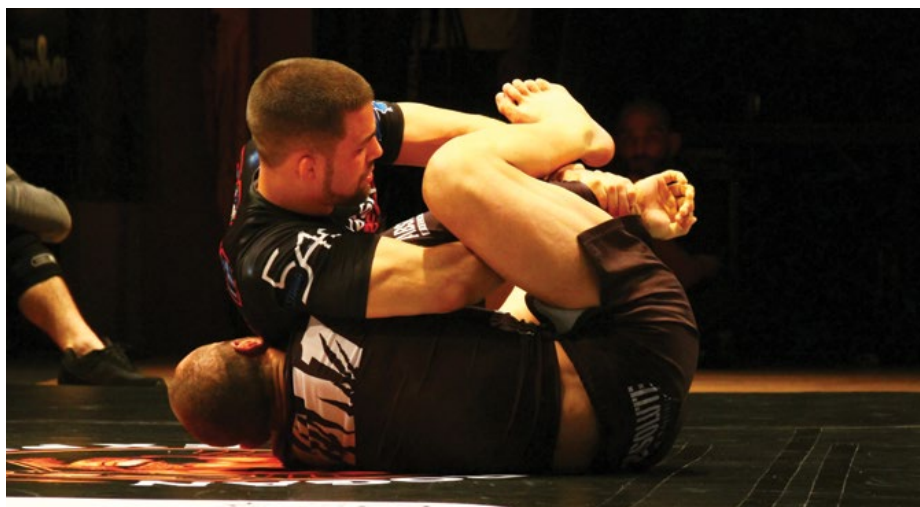
Rafael Domingos vs Kim Terra

Rafael Domingos wins during overtime with Terra injured

FINAL RESULT

Garry Tonon vs Rafael Domingos

Garry Tonon wins via heelhook



Above Left:
Lila Smadja vs
Talita Alencar.
Above Right:
Rafael Domingos vs
Denny Prokopos.
Left Middle:
Riley Breedlove.
Right Middle:
Garry Tonon vs
Lachlan Giles.



Above Left:
Rafael Domingos
vs Kim Terra.
Above Right:
Garry Tonon vs
Rafael Domingos.
Right: Garry Tonon
the Lightweight
Champion.



SUPER FIGHT RESULTS

Riley Breedlove vs Sophie Lee

Riley Breedlove wins via heelhook

Derek Rayfield vs Aaron Curtin

Derek Rayfield wins via triangle

Lila Smadja vs Talita Alencar

*Lila Smadja wins by two seconds faster
during overtime*



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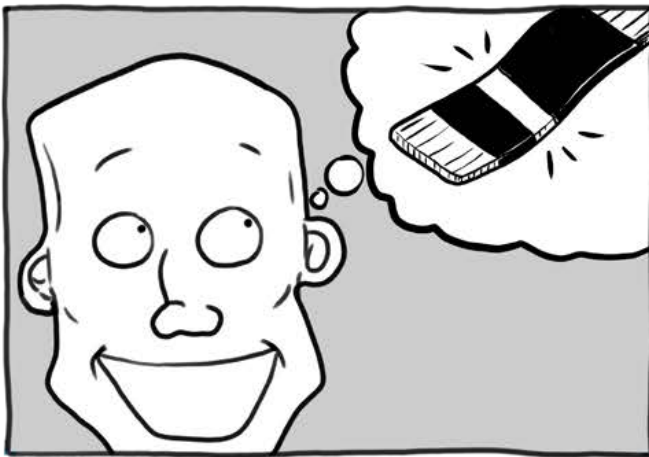
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MAT LIFE

THE ADVENTURES OF A BJJ NOOB
By Meerkatsu



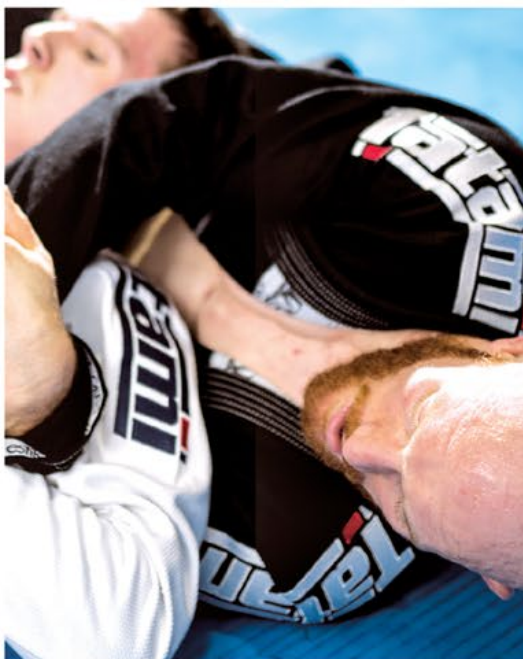
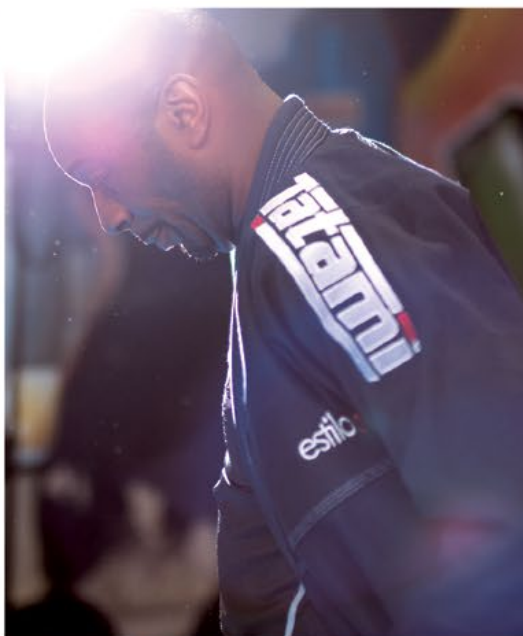


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